



Explore Learn Connect

Fall 2026 COURSES

- History
- Music
- Health & Wellness
- Theater
- Literature & Writing
- Law
- Social Sciences
- Fine Arts
- Politics & Public Affairs
- Science & Technology

 **Encore
Learning**
Expand your world

Encore Learning Fall 2026 Catalog

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Fall 2026 Course Offerings..... 1

Virtual Course Preview 2

General Information 3

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions 5

 🎵 Arts, Music & Performance 5

 ❤️ Health & Wellness 8

 📖 History & World Cultures 10

 🏛️ Government, Politics & Global Affairs..... 14

 📚 Literature & Writing 19

 🔬 Science & Technology..... 23

 🧠 Social Sciences 28

Encore Learning Special Events & Clubs 32

Board, Committee Members & Staff 33

Locations and Maps of Course Sites..... 34

Encore Learning Fall 2026 Courses: Calendar View Inside Back Cover



Encore Learning Fall 2026 Course Offerings

CATEGORY	COURSE # AND NAME	INSTRUCTOR	DAY	DATE	TIME	SITE
Arts, Music & Performance	1055 – Never Too Old to Play	Pilloff	F	10/9 – 11/6	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	1065 – Never Too Old to Play Some More	Pilloff	F	10/9 – 11/13	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	1066 – Best of Hitchcock	Sherwin	M	9/28 – 10/26	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Virtual
	1067 – Songwriters Gone Too Soon	MacCleave	W	10/14 – 11/4	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Virtual
	1068 – The Magic Behind Film Music, Part 1	Agron	TH	10/1 – 11/12	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Virtual
	1069 – Classic vs. Contemporary Plays	Klein Harber	M	9/28 – 11/9	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
Health & Wellness	2003 – Estate Planning Basics	Shaar/Park	TH	11/5 – 12/3	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Fairlington
	2028 – Living Healthier in Retirement	Bickford	M	10/5 – 11/23	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	2029 – Food and Health	Terzian	F	10/23 – 11/20	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	2030 – Emotional Health and Connections	Rehman	T	11/10 – 12/1	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
History & World Cultures	3103 – History of Military Aviation	Norton	T	11/10 – 12/1	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	GMU
	3104 – A Brief History of Language	Manteuffel	TH	10/1 – 10/22	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Virtual
	3105 – Civil War in Arlington	Vaselopoulos	W	10/7 – 11/4	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	GMU
	3106 – Fall of the Roman Republic	Timko	M	11/2 – 12/7	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Hybrid
	3107 – Making of Irish New York	Anbinder	W	10/7 – 11/11	10:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Hybrid
	3108 – Foodways: Food in History	Patterson	F	10/30 – 12/11	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Virtual
	3109 – Massive Resistance in Virginia	Fogarty	W	9/30 – 10/21	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Hybrid
Government, Politics & Global Affairs	4072 – Intelligence and Democracy	Seckinger	T	10/20 – 12/1	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	4073 – Asia-US Relations: Critical Issues	Sutter	TH	10/8 – 10/29	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Hybrid
	4074 – Inside the IMF	Michielse	F	10/9 – 11/20	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	4075 – Gerrymandering	French	TH	10/15 – 11/12	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Hybrid
	4076 – Issues in National Security	Siegrist	M	10/26 – 12/7	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	GMU
	4077 – Midterm Elections	Multiple	T	10/20 – 11/17	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	4078 – Hot Policy Topics in Virginia	Hynes	F	10/2 – 11/13	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Virtual
Literature & Writing	5083 – Writing A Memoir: Next Steps	Suydam	F	11/6 – 12/11	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Virtual
	5084 – Reading War and Peace: Part 2	Pfordresher	W	9/30 – 10/28	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Virtual
	5085 – Revolutionary Writers and Their Rhetoric	Sullivan	T	10/27 – 12/1	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	5086 – Beginning Creative Writing	Page	T	9/29 – 10/27	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	5087 – Great American Stories – 20th Century	Auten	F	10/16 – 11/20	10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Virtual
	5088 – Shakespeare's Comedies	Collins	T	10/20 – 11/17	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	In-Person
	5089 – Poetry of Seamus Heaney	Griffin	TH	10/1 – 10/22	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Hybrid
Science & Technology	6026 – Healthy Skepticism in a Data-driven World	Stutts	W	10/7 – 11/4	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	6027 – Exploring the Solar System	Summers	TH	10/15 – 12/3	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	6041 – Generative Artificial Intelligence	Fillip	TH	10/8 – 11/19	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Hybrid
	6046 – Chemistry Matters!	Savkar	T	10/6 – 10/27	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	GMU
	6047 – Education and Employment in the AI Era	Shapiro	T	9/29 – 10/27	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	GMU
	6048 – Autumn History and Nature Ambles	Multiple	TH	10/22 – 11/19	1:30 PM – 3:00 PM	Offsite
	6049 – Climate Change around the World	Edelstein	M	10/19 – 12/7	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Virtual
Social Sciences	7043 – Genealogy: Brick Walls & Questions	DeLauder	T	11/10 – 12/1	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Hybrid
	7044 – Cross-Cultural Romantic Love	Ahearn	W	10/14 – 11/4	10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	GMU
	7045 – US Immigration Policy	Albro	M	10/19 – 11/23	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Hybrid
	7046 – Population Trends	Multiple	W	10/7 – 10/28	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Hybrid



2026 FALL SEMESTER

September 28 to December 11

Wide variety of courses offered:

- Monday through Friday
- 10:00 AM, 12:00 PM or 2:00 PM

Registration Begins

10:00 AM on Tuesday, September 8

Check the online catalog for the most recent course updates:

<https://encorelearning.net/courses>

JOIN ENCORE LEARNING

42 COURSES

37 NEW COURSES

- 22 In-Person
- 10 Virtual
- 10 Hybrid
- 18 Recorded

A \$65 annual membership fee is required to register for courses. Each course registration costs \$55. Contact us at info@encorelearning.net or 703-228-2144 for help registering.



www.encorelearning.net



VIRTUAL COURSE PREVIEW

Thursday, September 3 at 9:30 AM

Join us as Encore Learning instructors talk about their upcoming classes.

Whether you are a current member or thinking about joining, Encore Learning invites you to find out more about what is coming in the fall!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89282144585>

Zoom Webinar ID: 892 8214 4585



General Information

For more information, go to our website at www.encorelearning.net



What Is Encore Learning?

Encore Learning, a nonprofit educational organization founded in 2002, offers a wide variety of daytime noncredit courses, clubs, special events and activities to help meet the continuing educational and social interests of anyone over age 50. Encore Learning is governed, supported and financed by its members. Our volunteer instructors create a stimulating learning environment through an exciting array of academic subjects. There are no tests or prerequisites but often some suggested reading. Encore Learning receives valuable assistance through alliances with George Mason University, the Arlington Public Schools Adult Education Program, Arlington Public Library and Arlington County's Office of Senior Adult Programs.

Encore Learning Membership

Membership in Encore Learning costs \$65 per year and begins on the day on which the *nonrefundable* membership fee is paid. Membership renewal adds 12 months to the membership expiration date, which can always be found by logging into your account online.

Your membership fee is a charitable contribution deductible from income taxes to the full extent permitted by law. All memberships are individual, non-transferable and processed online. To join, select JOIN at our website www.encorelearning.net.

Semester-Long Courses

Encore Learning will hold virtual (via Zoom), hybrid and in-person courses at George Mason's Arlington Campus and other locations for Fall 2026.

Encore Learning will record a select number of courses during the fall term. The decision on which courses will be recorded is based on course format, instructor preference and resources available. Each course description indicates if the course will be recorded.

Classes are typically scheduled weekdays between 10:00 AM and 3:30 PM. Classes meet once a week for

1.5 to 2 hours and each course lasts from four to 10 weeks. Class sizes generally range from 15 to 95, in cases of some very popular Zoom courses.

For virtual courses, you will need a computer, tablet or phone. Courses will vary in format depending on class size and content, with some having ongoing discussion and others reserving questions for the end of class.

Instructions for connecting to each Zoom course will be provided prior to the start of the course.

Course Previews

Encore Learning's fall and spring course previews offer an opportunity for members to hear the instructors describe their courses before course registration begins. Prospective members are also welcome.

Course Registration

Course registration is open only to current Encore Learning members. The fee for each course is \$55 and is *not* transferable. All course registrations are processed online via our website. Course registration for the Fall 2026 semester begins at 10:00 AM Tuesday, September 8, 2026.

All registrations are *first-come, first-served*; waitlists for filled courses are available online. Members get immediate feedback on their registration status upon payment and receive an emailed receipt, including any waitlist status. To register, go to our website and select REGISTER FOR COURSES/EVENTS.

The registration for a course is not meant to be shared. If any other individual is going to participate in the course with you, they must also register for the course.

Refund of course registration fees is available under certain circumstances. Please visit [encorelearning.net/about/policies](http://www.encorelearning.net/about/policies) for more detailed information.

Members may also transfer their course registration to another course with available space.

General Information *continued*

Class Materials

All course materials provided by instructors will be uploaded to a password-protected webpage on our website (www.encorelearning.net). The course webpage link and password will be shared in the course reminder email sent two to three days before the first class session. We recommend saving this email for easy access. You will also receive notifications with the link and password anytime new materials are added.

Links to all course pages are available through “access class pages” in the Courses menu on the main Encore Learning website. However, you will need the password provided in your course reminder email to access them.

Clubs

Encore Learning’s clubs are open to all current members. There are 12 clubs: Breakfast, Bridge, Chamber Music, Cinema, Current Issues Discussion, Global Lunch, Improv, Kayak, Mindfulness, Nonfiction Book, Tech Hobbyist and Travel. For information about club activities, please visit our website and click on CLUBS.

Special Events

Special Events include the Encore Learning Presents series that are free and open to the public. These one-time lectures, panel presentations or films are presented online or in a hybrid format (in-person and online). Many of our Encore Learning Presents events are recorded and available to view on our YouTube channel. Virtual and in-person member tours are also planned. For information about Special Events, please visit our website and click on EVENTS.

Membership Meeting

Encore Learning holds an annual membership meeting to elect a board of directors from a slate of candidates recruited by a nominating committee and to discuss the state of the organization. All current members will be notified of candidates for election to the board and receive a ballot to complete online. Membership meetings are generally held in May.

Volunteer at Encore Learning

Volunteers are the backbone of Encore Learning and work in conjunction with the organization’s part-time staff. There are a number of ways to get involved, whether by joining a committee, becoming an instructor

or class aide, or organizing special events. For more information on volunteering, please visit our website and click on VOLUNTEER.

Support Encore Learning

Encore Learning is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Any donation is a charitable contribution deductible from income taxes to the full extent permitted by law. Members, friends and organizations wishing to support Encore Learning may direct their contributions to our General Fund or to one of the many scholarship funds sponsored by Encore Learning. For more details on Encore Learning scholarships, please visit our website and search for “scholarships.”

Encore Learning Policies

Encore Learning is a nonprofit, equal opportunity organization open to individuals without regard to sex, race, color, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. For more information, visit encorelearning.net/about/policies.

Contact Encore Learning

Communicating with Encore Learning is easy, email: info@encorelearning.net

Leave a voice message: 703-228-2144



Review/Update

your account information online before registration begins on September 8.

- Note your password for easy access to your account on registration day.
- Choose your desired courses before logging in to register on September 8.
- Register online at 10:00 AM Tuesday, September 8 for your best chance at a seat in a popular course.
- Opt for a course waitlist if the course is filled.
- Complete your online registration and payment within 20 minutes.
- Sit back and wait for classes to begin.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions

This semester's offerings includes virtual courses taught on Zoom, in-person courses at George Mason University's Mason Square (see p. 34), offsite courses at various locations around Arlington, and hybrid courses, which will be simultaneously taught virtually and in-person.

 Virtual courses are noted with the Zoom icon.

 In-person courses are noted with the people icon.

 Hybrid courses are noted with both icons. All hybrid courses are held at George Mason University and virtually on Zoom.

A select number of virtual courses will be recorded based on the course format and instructor preference. The recordings will be available to registered students within two business days of the end of each class session. Recordings will remain available until February 28, 2027. While the recordings are provided for convenience and to accommodate any scheduling conflicts, they are not intended to replace the benefits of attending in real time, where you can ask questions and participate in discussions.

 Recorded courses are noted with the microphone icon.

Visit <https://encorelearning.net/courses> for the most up to date information on our Fall courses, including a link to registration.

Fall registration begins at 10:00 AM Tuesday, September 8, 2026.



Arts, Music & Performance

1055 Never Too Old to Play: Introduction to Improv

 Instructor: Steve Pilloff

Friday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/9 – 11/6

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

Do you like to laugh? Do you enjoy connecting with supportive people? Do you cherish moments of joy? If you answered “yes” to these questions, this is the course for you!

We will gather in a safe, encouraging environment to play and explore. Using our imaginations, we will create fun worlds, collaborative stories and an overall sense of connected joy. Class members will learn improv by participating in various games, activities and exercises that involve working together, listening to each other, making choices, and discovering that mistakes can be gifts. They will develop trust, not only in themselves, but also in each other.

Everyone is welcome – no prior improv or theater experience is needed – and you do not need to be funny. Just bring yourself: you are enough!

1065 Never Too Old to Play Some More

 Instructor: Steve Pilloff

Friday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/9 – 11/13

Sessions: 6; Location: GMU

Ready for more laughter, creativity, and connection? This advanced improv course is for those who have completed Never Too Old to Play (or have comparable experience with improv or theater) and want to keep exploring the joy of improvisation. The instructor will introduce new games and techniques that deepen character work, storytelling and scene creation.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

You will learn how to craft engaging scenes, collaborate creatively, build on each other's ideas, and embrace bold choices, all in a supportive environment.

The course will culminate in a joyful performance for invited guests, giving you the chance to share your creativity and teamwork on stage. Participation is optional – no pressure, just play, growth and celebration! Bring your curiosity, your sense of humor and your willingness to explore. You have already discovered that you are never too old to play. Now it is time to play some more!

Steve Pilloff is an improv teacher, producer and performer at George Mason University, where he is a professor in the Costello College of Business. He has conducted improv workshops for various student groups and serves as the faculty advisor to the Mason Improv Association. He has taught improv classes and performs with Washington Improv Theater and at various indie shows throughout the D.C.-Baltimore area. He also organizes and produces improv shows in Northern Virginia.

1066 Danger, Suspense and Deception: The Best of Alfred Hitchcock

 **Instructor: Jay Sherwin**

Monday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
9/28 – 10/26 (No class on 10/12)
Sessions: 4; Location: Virtual

Alfred Hitchcock is one of the most legendary figures in the history of Hollywood films. In his remarkable 50-year career as a director, he created dozens of memorable, suspenseful films, many filled with flawed heroes, charming villains and moral ambiguity.

In this four-week online course, we will consider some of Hitchcock's very best films, focusing on two films each week that share a common theme. Students will receive a list of films in advance and should watch them on their own before each class; all the films are available to rent inexpensively online. In class, we will look at brief film clips and discuss key motifs.

Whether you have enjoyed Hitchcock films for many years or you are just discovering them, this is a chance

to dig deeper into some of the most fascinating movies ever produced. Join us to explore the mind of a brilliant, complicated man and the surprising, confounding, entertaining world he created on film.

Jay Sherwin is a writer and consultant who has been watching, studying and enjoying Hitchcock films for decades. He created a walking tour of Alfred Hitchcock's San Francisco that attracts Hitchcock fans from around the world, and he loves to share his Hitchcock obsession with fellow film lovers everywhere. He has taught this online course for adult learning programs nationwide.

1067 Songwriters Gone Too Soon: Lasting Legacies

 **Instructor: Linda MacCleave**

Wednesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
10/14 – 11/4
Sessions: 4; Location: Virtual and Recorded

This class honors songwriters who died too soon, but produced songs of cultural significance. Twelve songwriters will be studied, three each week. We will explore their lives, their early deaths and their legacies, and hear some of their songs performed by themselves and others. They may be gone, but their songs live on.

Session 1: Robert Johnson, Laura Nyro, Phil Ochs
Session 2: Hank Williams, Sandy Denny, Townes Van Zandt
Session 3: Kate Wolf, Steve Goodman, Gram Parsons
Session 4: Sam Cooke, Bobby Darin, Buddy Holly

The instructor will provide links to background information on the course webpage when class begins. Lyrics will also be distributed.

Linda MacCleave earned an MA in English education from Virginia Commonwealth University and is a retired teacher. Her appreciation for the inspirational poetry of folk and country music has led her to share the history and interpretation of songs with her peers. She also teaches classes at the University of Richmond and Virginia Tech.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

1068 The Magic Behind Film Music, Part 1

 Instructor: Mike Agron

Thursday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/1 – 11/12 (No class on 10/29)

Sessions: 6; Location: Virtual and Recorded

In this six-week seminar, discover how film music enhances storytelling, mood and character. When we talk about film music, we are not just talking about background sound. Music is the emotional engine of a film: it defines characters; sets tone and place; builds suspense; and blends jazz, classical, and pop styles into lasting cinematic impressions.

We will focus both on how instrumental scores drive emotion and storytelling and how songs carry the story. But we will also explore the full range of film music – from torch songs and jazz standards to pop classics that became part of the cinematic moment. In this series, songs are not just occasional highlights, they are woven throughout the narrative alongside the score.

We will trace the evolution of film music beginning with early sound cinema and explore how composers shape emotion across six core themes:

- How Music Shapes Movies
- Drama and Romance
- Comedy and Romance
- Action and Adventure
- Film Noir and Jazz, Part 1
- Film Noir and Jazz, Part 2

You will meet influential composers such as Max Steiner, Bernard Herrmann, Elmer Bernstein, Henry Mancini, Quincy Jones, Lalo Schiffrin and John Williams – artists whose work redefined how movies sound and feel. Ideal for film lovers and lifelong learners alike, this course celebrates the artistry of film music and its power to make stories – and melodies – truly unforgettable.

Note: This is Part 1 of a two-part series. Part 2 (in spring 2027) will expand the lens to spotlight the interplay between scores and songs in cinematic storytelling – from Bond to the Beatles and beyond.

Mike Agron grew up in Los Angeles, the heart of the recording and entertainment industry. He is a former executive and entrepreneur turned storyteller who crafts dynamic seminars on music and film. He has led hundreds of sessions for older adults at The Renaissance Society at California State University, Sacramento, and numerous Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes across the country.

1069 Classic vs. Contemporary Plays

 Instructor: Tessa Klein Harber

Monday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

9/28 – 11/9 (No class on 10/12)

Sessions: 6; Location: GMU

Discover your creativity and deepen your appreciation of theatre in this six-week *Creative Age* class with the Educational Theatre Company (ETC). Participants will read, discuss and analyze one classic and one contemporary play, comparing how each reflects its time and society. Through guided group readings and lively discussion, the class will explore themes, characters and dramatic structure, considering how playwrights across eras approach universal questions of love, power and identity.

This session we will be looking at Anton Chekov's *The Seagull* and Stephen Karam's *The Humans*. We will explore modern adaptations as well as a translation of Chekov's original masterpiece, alongside Karam's blistering, funny 2015 tragicomedy. Whether you are revisiting old favorites or encountering new voices, you will engage in thoughtful conversation and creative reflection in a welcoming, supportive space.

Tessa Klein Harber has been a teaching artist with ETC's *Creative Age* program since 2023. She has performed in numerous shows in the Washington metropolitan area; and appears regularly at Studio Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre, Round House Theatre, Theater J and Olney Theatre. Her Broadway and off-Broadway credits include Tony Award-winner *War Horse* at Lincoln Center and many shows at the Irish Repertory Theatre. She holds a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*



Health & Wellness

2003 Estate Planning Basics

 Instructor: Dina Chatila Shaar and Sarah Park

Thursday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11/5 – 12/3 (No class on 11/26)

Sessions: 4; Location: Fairlington Community Center

The instructors will share their experience with estate planning and retirement living with seniors and their families. The course will cover:

- 1. An Overview of Estate Planning:** Taxes, laws and issues that surround estates and how the documents we use help us to prepare for incapacity and death.
- 2. Trusts:** What “trusts” are and how they serve us, both before and after death.
- 3. Funding Your Living Trust:** The process for transferring (“funding”) various types of assets into a Living Trust.
- 4. Medical Decision Making and Advance Health Care Directives:** Preparing for a time when we are unable to make our own medical decisions.

Dina Chatila Shaar is a Virginia-licensed estate planning attorney who brings practical experience and a client-centered approach to her work. She has a JD degree from the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University (GMU) and has focused on creating tailored estate plans that address individual circumstances and priorities.

Sarah Parks is an attorney who limits her practice to estate planning. Her firm is Custom Estate Planning, which she has been operating since 1995. She has a JD degree from the Antonin Scalia Law School at GMU and an LLM from the Georgetown University Law Center.

2028 How to Live Healthier, Happier and Longer in Retirement

 Instructor: Brad Bickford

Monday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/5 – 11/23 (No class on 10/12)

Sessions: 7; Location: GMU

This course explores practical research-based strategies for optimal aging. Learn how to support brain health and prevent dementia and why seniors need to exercise regularly. We will discuss finding purpose in retirement as well as staying socially active, and how both are related to prevention of dementia. In addition, the course will cover the differences in men’s and women’s health and critical communication skills that strengthen relationships; essential foods that enable seniors to stave off cancer and cardiac disease; and the effect on overall health and longevity of what we put on our bodies for personal care. Students will also learn from TED Talks, discussion and lecture; and the role of humor as a learning tool and factor contributing to happiness.

Recommended Reading: How to Live Healthier & Happier & Longer in Retirement: 8 Essential Pillars, Brad Bickford.

Brad Bickford, LCSW, BCD, is an author and national lecturer. He teaches at American University’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!



[www.facebook.com/
EncoreLearningArlington](http://www.facebook.com/EncoreLearningArlington)

Check Out Our YouTube Channel



[www.youtube.com/
@encorelearning2002](http://www.youtube.com/@encorelearning2002)

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

2029 Food and Health: Why It Is So Confusing, What We Are Learning Now

 **Instructor:** Alicja Terzian

Friday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/23 – 11/20

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

Learn about the fundamental principles of nutrition and its impact on human health. We will look at how food affects the body and the relationship between diet, disease prevention and overall well-being. That includes gut microbiome and bioactive compounds to diet patterns that influence disease and longevity. Why is nutrition so often confusing or contradictory? The instructor will debunk common myths and misconceptions about nutrition using scientific evidence and discuss how to apply practical, evidence-based approaches to dietary choices. Students will learn about personalized nutrition, optimal diets for overall health and fad diets. They will develop a clearer, more confident framework for evaluating food and health information, while recognizing that nutrition science evolves over time.

Class 1: Introduces macronutrients, micronutrients, and bioactive compounds, explaining their roles, recommended amounts, effects of deficiency or excess, and the distinction between nutrient density and calorie intake.

Class 2: Explores how fiber, the microbiome, and gut health affect digestion, overall health, and conditions like constipation and reflux, including roles of pre/probiotics and links to immunity, mental health, and chronic disease.

Class 3: Examines how diet influences major diseases; reviews healthy eating patterns and popular diets; evaluates supplement use; and explains concepts like oxidative stress and free radicals.

Class 4: Evaluates personalized nutrition, with a focus on how genetics, microbiome and lifestyle drive individual differences in dietary responses; and the overall shift toward tailored diet strategies.

Class 5: Explains why nutrition research can be conflicting; teaches how to apply a critical eye to

interpret studies and headlines; and covers current topics like ultra-processed foods, dietary guidelines, brain health and smart food shopping/label reading.

Alicja Terzian holds BS, MS and PhD degrees with a strong research background in biochemistry and genetics. She is a senior lecturer in biochemistry, cell biology, and nutrition; and has organized and taught a nutrition laboratory curriculum at Simmons College, tutored and evaluated medical students at Harvard Medical School, and taught biology and nutrition courses at Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University.

2030 Understanding Ourselves and Those We Love: Emotional Health and Connections in Later Life

 **Instructor:** Sonia Syed Rehman

Tuesday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11/10 – 12/1

Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

At every stage of life, we are called on to understand ourselves and those we love in new ways. Later years often bring fresh questions — about identity, relationships, health and emotional well-being. In four sessions, this course offers practical tools, shared conversation and compassionate insight for navigating those changes with confidence and care:

1. Understanding ADHD and Autism at Any Age:

Have you recently learned that you or someone you love might have ADHD or autism? Using simple language and group conversations, you will learn how these traits show up in daily life; find easy tools to reduce frustration; get practical tips for talking with doctors and family; and discover the strengths that can accompany different types of brains.

2. Embracing and Supporting the Identities of Those We Love:

This interactive session will teach skills to support a family member who is transgender or gender-diverse, whether a grandchild exploring their identity, an adult child coming out or a partner transitioning later in life. Using real-life scenarios, you will learn to listen without trying to fix, set caring boundaries without rejecting and understand hidden struggles.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

3. A Compassionate Guide to Anxiety As We Age:

Whether you are dealing with constant worry, sleep disruption or physical symptoms, this session will help you understand the issues of anxiety after age 50.

Through simple tracking and in-class practice, you will learn to recognize patterns, apply calming techniques and understand when to seek professional help.

4. **Intimacy and Connection in Later Life:** This practical class will help you discover new paths to affection and closeness. Using gentle self-reflection, you will explore how aging affects intimacy, clarify personal preferences and boundaries, and discover low-pressure ways to nurture connections.

Sonia Syed Rehman is a licensed clinical psychologist and lifespan neuropsychologist at Brain Care Clinic in Arlington, Virginia. She has worked with all ages across diverse clinical settings and has published on topics such as loneliness in older adults, sleep, depression and cognitive functioning. Her work in diversity and neuropsychology has earned national awards.



DON'T Forget!

Fall 2026 Course Preview
on Thursday, September 3
at 9:30 AM on Zoom.

Invite your friends and
neighbors to join!

See page 2 for details



History & World Cultures

3103 History of Military Aviation: Expectation Meets Experience

 Instructor: Doug Norton

Tuesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

11/10 – 12/1

Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

This course will consider the evolution of military aviation from the time of the Wright brothers to the end of World War II. We will use charts and video to trace the emergence across four periods: 1909–1919, 1920–1931, 1932–1943 and 1943–1945.

Military aviation's development marked a profound change in the history of warfare, but the path has seldom been linear. There was no "natural" route; rather, countries made incremental decisions to meet anticipated needs. We will look at developments in the U.S., both in the Army and Navy, as well as parallel advances in the UK, France, Germany, Russia and Japan. The tension between aviation doctrine (what nations want aviation to do and how they procure assets to do it) versus experience in actual combat (how those assets perform, and if they do not, how nations change their approach).

The course will emphasize both the aircraft selection decisions made by these countries and the personalities who advocated for or against them. What experiences drove Billy Mitchell's advocacy of an independent air arm? Who was Giulio Douhet and how was his concept of command of the air interpreted across countries? What eventually caused U.S. doctrine on strategic bombing to change late in World War II? Aviation technology in each period is the basis for decisions, but the role of non-military aviation in each period will also be addressed.

This is a wide-ranging course with room for discussion among those interested. After the last class, the instructor will offer a tour of the National Air and Space Museum.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

Doug Norton is an amateur historian interested in the development of aviation. He is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, with a master's degree from the University of Hawaii's East-West Center. He served in the Air Force for 14 years, worked at NASA for 18 years, and spent 11 years in the private sector focused on the federal government. He is also a private pilot and a docent at the National Air and Space Museum.

3104 A Brief History of Language

 Instructor: Tom Manteuffel

Thursday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/1 – 10/22

Sessions: 4; Location: Virtual and Recorded

Language is likely our most important innovation, a tool unlike any other, and the deep history of its evolution is only now yielding up its secrets. When and how — and why — did language appear and evolve? How did one particular language, Proto-Indo-European, come to push out many alternatives to become today's global *lingua franca*? How does language really work? Is it innate in some way? We will uncover some fresh answers to these questions and more.

Tom Manteuffel has presented classes at Encore Learning for years on a variety of subjects. Most recently, he taught about Classical Greece and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. He is a retired cybersecurity consultant with graduate degrees in philosophy and computer science.

3105 Visualizing the Civil War in Arlington

 Instructor: Peter Vaselopoulos

Wednesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/7 – 11/4

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

This course will explore how one of the most transformative periods in American history was seen, recorded and remembered. Using visual media, from battlefield photography and illustrated newspapers to maps, paintings, monuments and modern digital reconstructions, participants will examine how images shaped public understanding of the war then and how they continue to influence memories today.

Students will analyze the work of pioneering photographers such as Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner, whose stark images brought the realities of conflict into public view. The course also considers the role of visual storytelling in publications like *Harper's Weekly*, as well as the creation of wartime maps, political cartoons, recruitment posters and memorial art. Through a combination of historical inquiry and creative practice, students will learn to interpret visual sources as historical evidence; assess issues of bias and representation; and explore how race, memory and identity are constructed through imagery.

The course page on the Encore Learning website will provide a wide range of reputable digital archives and collections where Civil War imagery can be accessed for research and creative projects. At the end of the course, students will create their own visual interpretation of a Civil War theme by selecting one image and using some of the visual analysis techniques taught in class. They will have the option to give a three-to-five-minute class presentation.

Main Skills To Be Learned:

- Analyze visual materials as primary historical sources
- Understand the technological and cultural context of Civil War imagery
- Evaluate how visual narratives shape historical memory and public perception
- Develop talents in visual storytelling and historical interpretation

Format: Lectures, image analysis workshops, discussions, and a final creative or research project.

Audience: Suitable for students of history, art history, media studies and anyone interested in the Civil War and visual culture.

Peter Vaselopoulos is president of the Arlington Historical Society. He worked for the Voice of America for 35 years as a broadcast journalist, television producer and information technology specialist, concluding his career as a deputy chief information officer. He has a master's degree in international communications; a master's degree in managing information systems; and, more recently, a master's certificate in public history.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

3106 Fall of the Roman Republic

 Instructor: David Timko

Monday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11/2 – 12/7

Sessions: 6; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

Popular culture in recent years has shown an increased interest in ancient history, especially ancient Rome. While this interest is welcome, we need to get our facts straight. This six-session course will focus on the crucial period in Roman history when the state transitioned from a power-sharing republic to an autocracy under Augustus Caesar. This period, from about 133 BCE to CE 14, is of perennial interest, particularly in the United States, whose Founding Fathers were inspired by the ideals of the Roman Republic.

The instructor will explain the structure and functioning of the Roman Republic and examine the causes of its breakdown in its final decades. Topics include the Gracchi brothers, Marius and Sulla, and Pompey and Caesar, with attention to the political, military and social factors that contributed to the decline. The course concludes with Augustus' rise to power and the establishment of a new political order that brought stability after years of civil war.

David Timko is a former PhD student in ancient history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After leaving academia, he worked for the federal government for 22 years and retired in 2025.



**Join, Renew,
Update
or Register**

GO TO [EncoreLearning.net](https://encorelearning.net)
and click on **MEMBERSHIP**.

If you need help, click on
HELP/FAQs.

3107 Five Points and the Making of Irish New York

 Instructor: Tyler Anbinder

Wednesday 10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

10/7 – 11/11

Sessions: 6; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

This course will look at how, over the course of the 19th century, Irish Americans came to dominate the population and politics of New York City. Class sessions will address the following topics:

Session 1: Irish immigrants in New York City in the years before the Great Famine, including the formation of the historic Five Points neighborhood.

Session 2: The causes and consequences of the famine that resulted from the potato blight of 1845, and British indifference to the plight of its victims.

Sessions 3 and 4: The life the Irish made for themselves in New York City.

Session 5: The role of the New York Irish in the Civil War, as well as how Irish immigrants in the 1860s began to gain control of the city's politics. We will watch scenes from the 2002 film *Gangs of New York* and consider to what extent it is historically accurate.

Session 6: How the New York Irish fanned out across America, and how their lives differed from the immigrants who remained in New York City. This final session will also look at the New York Irish community in the late 1800s and examine the extent to which the Famine Irish were able to achieve the upward mobility they craved despite the unprecedented impediments that stood in their way.

Tyler Anbinder is emeritus professor of history at The George Washington University, where he taught courses on the history of American immigration and the American Civil War era. He is the author of *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s*; *Five Points: The 19th Century New York Neighborhood that Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World's Most Notorious Slum*; *City of Dreams: The 400-Year Epic History of Immigrant New York*; and *Plentiful Country: The Great Potato Famine and the Making of Irish New York*.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

3108 Foodways: How Six Foods Changed Human History

 Instructor: Brian Patterson

Friday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/30 – 12/11 (No class on 11/27)

Sessions: 6; Location: Virtual and Recorded

“Foodways” explores how certain foods entered the human experience and came to shape culture, economy, belief, ecology and power. Rather than focusing on recipes or culinary techniques, this discussion-based course examines how foods were cultivated, transported, feared, shared, monetized and fought over. Through six foods – corn, potato, tomato, cod, nutmeg and beer – participants will learn how food choices reflect deeper systems of history and identity.

Course participants will learn:

- The concept of foodways and how it applies across cultures
- How foods move through history, trade and belief systems
- Why new foods are often met with resistance or fear
- How ecological choices such as monoculture, biodiversity and regenerative agriculture affect society
- How to apply historical foodways thinking to modern food systems

Recommended Reading: *Cod: A Biography of the Fish that Changed the World*, Mark Kurlansky; *Nathaniel's Nutmeg: Or the True and Incredible Adventures of the Spice Trader Who Changed the Course of History*, Giles Milton; *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*, Michael Pollan; *A History of the World in Six Glasses*, Tom Standage; *The Potato: How the Humble Spud Rescued the Western World*, Larry Zuckerman; *Tomato: A Global History*, Clarissa Hyman.

Brian Patterson is the innovation and development chef for Goodwin Living in Northern Virginia, leading culinary initiatives to support, honor and uplift the lives of older adults and those who care for them. He received his BA from the University of Chicago and his culinary diploma from *L'Academie de Cuisine*. He went on to teach culinary arts at his alma mater as well as conduct lectures and cooking demonstrations on stage

at the Smithsonian Museum of American History. From 2018 to 2020, he led the farm-to-table-inspired cafe at Glenstone Museum in Potomac, MD.

3109 Massive Resistance in Virginia: Two Paths to School Desegregation

  Instructor: Bill Fogarty

Wednesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

9/30 – 10/21

Sessions: 4; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

This course explores Virginia's dramatic and often contentious response to the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, focusing on the pivotal years from 1954 to 1959. We will examine how the Virginia General Assembly and statewide elected officials reacted to the ruling and the policies they pursued during the era of “Massive Resistance.”

The instructor will place special emphasis on events in Arlington and Norfolk, the first Virginia communities ordered by federal courts to desegregate their public schools. Although both faced the same constitutional mandate, their responses and outcomes diverged in revealing ways. By comparing the choices made by their respective local leaders, activists, and ordinary citizens, participants will gain a deeper understanding of how national civil rights decisions played out on the ground in Virginia – and how local actions helped shape the Commonwealth's path through one of the most consequential periods in American education and civil rights history.

Bill Fogarty is a retired attorney who has lived and worked in Arlington for more than 40 years. He recently took up a new avocation of writing and teaching about Arlington and Virginia history. He has written for *The Arlington Historical Magazine*, presented at the Arlington Historical Society and taught several history classes for Encore Learning. He also writes the “Our Man in Arlington” column for the *Falls Church News-Press*.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*



Government, Politics & Global Affairs

4072 Intelligence in Democratic Societies

 Instructor: Ron Seckinger

Tuesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/20 – 12/1 (No class on 11/3)

Sessions: 6; Location: GMU

This course focuses on the development of U.S. intelligence capabilities from the 1920s to the present. Internal efforts to adapt to changing circumstances are essential to the discussion. So are external pressures such as public opinion and congressional interest in CIA activities. An underlying theme consists of the tensions inherent in obtaining and protecting national security information through secret institutions while ensuring the safeguarding of U.S. citizen rights and democratic practices. Key questions include:

- What were the deficiencies and strengths of U.S. intelligence during the 20 years preceding the Second World War?
- How did Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor reveal flaws in U.S. intelligence?
- How did the U.S. government construct a post-Second World War intelligence structure?
- What was the impact of press exposés in the 1970s of CIA and FBI violations of legal restrictions?
- How might U.S. intelligence agencies respond to new challenges in a changing national security environment?
- How should the U.S. ensure a balance between secrecy and protection of democratic government?

The instructor will set the stage for discussion topics or to fill gaps in recommended readings. Most class time will be devoted to discussions in a seminar format. A few brief articles will be recommended for each class meeting, generally no more than an hour's worth of reading. In the seminar format, a successful discussion will be dependent on students having done the reading prior to class. Additional readings will be suggested for eager learners.

Recommended Readings: "Intelligence Warnings of the Pearl Harbor Attack Before Dec. 7, 1941," *History on the Net*; The National Security Act of 1947, Public Law 253; "MK Ultra: Mind-Control, LSD and the US Government," Eva Campbell, *Retrospect Journal*; "US Intelligence, Domestic Surveillance, and the Time of Troubles," David Robarge, *Studies in Intelligence*, June 2024; "New Frontiers in Intelligence: The Changing Nature of Espionage," Council on Foreign Relations, November 7, 2025; "CIA Has a Gen Z Problem: Young Spies Are Just Not 'Feeling It,'" SPYSCAPE.

Ron Seckinger served 22 years as political analyst and senior executive with the Central Intelligence Agency. He spent 10 years working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security as a federal contractor. He holds degrees from Duke University, the University of Florida and Harvard University.

4073 Asia-US Relations: Critical Issues

   Instructor: Robert Sutter

Thursday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/8 – 10/29

Sessions: 4; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

Amid contemporary U.S.-China rivalry, this course will assess the relevant background, status and outlook of U.S. relations with and policy toward Asia:

1. Contemporary Asian issues involving the rise of China, the status of Taiwan, North Korean nuclear weapons development and South Korean ambitions.
2. Japan's future, territorial disputes along the rim of eastern and southeast Asia, and the ambitions and limitations of southeast Asian and Pacific governments.
3. The role of India amid crises and conflicts in south Asia, and Russian motivations along with China's influence in central Asia.
4. A full assessment of the impact of major U.S.-led economic shifts away from globalization; the changes in American foreign policy from past

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

emphasis on nurturing allies and partners to more assertive and disruptive transactional relationships; and regional mixed reactions to U.S. initiatives.

The instructor will share material from *Asia in the Balance* (see below) in each session and may include other independent reading regarding material covered in class.

Recommended Reading: Asia in the Balance: US-China Competition in a Contested Regional Order (not yet published), Robert Sutter.

Robert Sutter earned a PhD from Harvard University and is a professor of international affairs at George Washington University. He has published 23 books dealing with U.S.-Asian relations. In his government career from 1968 to 2001, he held various positions in the Congressional Research Service, National Intelligence Council, Department of State and Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He was the top analyst-administrator on foreign affairs at CRS and top analyst in the intelligence community on Asian affairs.

4074 Inside the International Monetary Fund: Origins, Operations and Global Role

 **Instructor: Geerten Michielse**

Friday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
10/9 – 11/20 (No class on 10/30)
Sessions: 6; Location: GMU

This overview of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will begin with its origins at the Bretton Woods Conference. Then the instructor will trace its development through significant economic events and reforms in the international monetary system. The six sessions have been designed to build a comprehensive understanding of the IMF's role in the global economy.

- 1. Origins and Evolution:** The historical foundations of the IMF, from the Bretton Woods Conference to its evolution through major global economic crises and structural changes in the international monetary system.
- 2. Governance and Institutional Structure:** The IMF's governance framework, internal organizational

structure, accountability mechanisms, and the role of the Annual and Spring Meetings.

- 3. Financing and Legal Framework:** How the IMF is financed, including the quota system; Special Drawing Rights; gold reserves; and the legal basis of IMF operations under the Articles of Agreement.
- 4. Surveillance:** The IMF's surveillance activities, including Article IV consultations, country monitoring, risk identification, and global and regional surveillance through flagship reports.
- 5. Lending and Conditionality:** The IMF's lending role, the range of financial instruments it uses and the conditionality attached to IMF programs.
- 6. Capacity Development and Support for Low-Income Countries:** The IMF's capacity development work across fiscal, financial, legal, and statistical areas, as well as debt sustainability frameworks and support mechanisms for low-income countries.

Geerten Michielse is a native of the Netherlands and lives in Arlington. He received his PhD from the Katholieke Universiteit Brabant in Tilburg and taught tax law as a tenured professor in the Netherlands. He was a visiting professor in Paris and at Georgetown University. Since 2000, he has worked at the International Monetary Fund, first as a lawyer drafting tax laws and later as a senior economist designing tax policies. He has advised governments in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Encore Learning offers
FINANCIAL AID
to those with
demonstrated need.
For more details, check:
[www.encorelearning.net/
about/membership-scholarships](http://www.encorelearning.net/about/membership-scholarships)

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

4075 Gerrymandering

 Instructor: Peter French

Thursday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/15 – 11/12

Sessions: 5; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

This course explores the history and legal evolution of legislative redistricting – and its evil twin gerrymandering – in the United States from the early republic to today. Session 1 covers the basics of what gerrymandering is, who does it, and how it works, with some striking examples.

In **Session 2** we examine major Supreme Court cases on redistricting, including the “one person, one vote” mandate, the racial cases that resulted in “majority-minority” districts and the failure to address partisan gerrymandering.

Session 3 looks at the impact of gerrymandering on voting laws, voters and polarization. We will focus in particular on Operation REDMAP, by which the Republican Party catapulted from its big win in the 2010 midterm elections to gerrymandering dominance in 26 states that survives to this day. We will also cover the gerrymandering war launched by the Trump administration to maintain Republican control of Congress in the 2026 midterms. Students will have an opportunity to forecast who will win that war and by how much. We will know the full election results either by Session 4 or 5.

Sessions 4 and 5 will evaluate alternative approaches, including independent commissions, redistricting practices in other countries and measures imposed by state supreme courts. Finally, we grapple with this question: If we could enact a law to prevent or at least constrain gerrymandering, what would it look like?

Peter French has a BA in history from Reed College and a MS in civil engineering-transportation systems from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He served as a legislative aide in the Massachusetts state legislature from 1972 to 1974 and observed the first redistricting there after the “one person-one vote” mandate. He retired in 2015 after 37 years as an economist and analyst with the Association of American Railroads.

4076 Issues in National Security

 Instructor: David Siegrist

Monday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/26 – 12/7

Sessions: 7; Location: GMU

This course will address both national and technological strategic threats to U.S. security. We will discuss the changing national security strategy and doctrine; examine near-peer adversaries Russia and China; and describe technological threats including nuclear, biological, artificial intelligence and cyber threats. We will end by assessing the recent conflict with Iran and how that reshapes the world security posture.

1. National Security Strategy and U.S. Doctrine:

The new strategy and the American pivot to the Western Hemisphere, while still competing with China and attacking Iran.

2. Russia and Ukraine:

Russia’s revanchist ambitions are at odds with falling birth rates and economic decline. Does Ukraine’s surprisingly strong resistance indicate a new type of warfare?

3. Managing Conflict with China:

A rising power seeks worldwide prestige and dominance of Taiwan. Can the U.S. compete successfully with China and its global influence?

4. Cyber Threats, Critical Infrastructure and Artificial Intelligence:

Cyber threats can turn out our lights and shut off the water. Can anything be done? Artificial Intelligence as both servant and threat.

5. Emerging Biological Threats:

Synthetic biology, gain-of-function research and more.

6. Nuclear Weapons – The Sum of All Fears:

How can the U.S. deter both China and Russia? Is a nuclear war becoming more likely?

7. Iran: The Third Gulf War and the Way Ahead.

Needed intervention, critical victory or stumbling stone?

Recommended Reading: National Security Strategy of the United States of America, November 2025; A Primer on

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

Russian Cognitive Warfare, Institute for the Study of War; *Military and Security Developments in the People's Republic of China*, U.S. Department of Defense; *The National Biodefense Strategy*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; *Defense Primer: Strategic Nuclear Forces*, Library of Congress; "The A.I. Prompt that Could End the World," Stephen Witt, *New York Times*, October 10, 2025.

David Siegrist has taught both noncredit and graduate courses at George Mason University and Georgetown University. He was the national strategy public policy fellow at GU, where he earned a master's in government, and he earned a PhD in biodefense from GMU. He recently retired from The MITRE Corporation, where for 16 years his work supported the U.S. government, largely in areas limiting weapons of mass destruction and countering proliferation.

4077 Assessing the Midterm Elections

 Instructor: Multiple

Tuesday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
10/20 – 11/17 (No class on 11/3)
Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

Congressional elections in the middle of every presidential term always spur hope for change within the minority party in the House and Senate. The 2026 elections are no exception, and the campaign is unfolding in a frenzy of activity. Desperate to hang on to Republican majorities in the two chambers of Congress, President Donald Trump pushed conservative states to abandon the longtime practice of reconfiguring congressional districts once a decade. The president asked red states to redraw their congressional maps to increase the number of likely Republican districts. Texas, Missouri and North Carolina complied with his request, prompting California, Virginia and other blue states to respond with their own redistricting efforts. Then, the U.S. Supreme Court weighed in.

In this course, political experts from George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government will offer a preview and post-mortem analysis of the 2026 midterms.

Session 1: The Midterm Elections: What's in the Cards?
(Mark Rozell, 10/20)

What does history suggest is likely to happen in the midterm elections? What might make this year a historical outlier that defies the precedents? Join Mark Rozell as he discusses these two key questions.

Session 2: Historic Trends in Midterm Elections
(Bill Bolling, 10/27)

The speaker will look at how midterm elections have reshaped the political balance in Washington over the last several decades and flag some of the key races to watch in 2026, with an emphasis on the Senate. He will discuss voter attitudes and key issues driving them.

Session 3: What Just Happened?
(David Ramadan, 11/10)

One week after the November 3, 2026 midterms, the speaker will offer a summary and analysis of the election results.

Session 4: What to Expect in 2027 and Beyond
(Terry McAuliffe, 11/17)

The former Virginia governor will offer his perspective on what the midterms revealed and what they mean for the road ahead.

Mark Rozell, founding dean of the Schar School, also holds the Ruth D. and John T. Hazel Faculty Chair in Public Policy at GMU. He is the author or co-author of 14 books and editor of 20 additional books on various topics involving U.S. government and politics, including the presidency, religion and politics, media and politics, Southern politics and the role of interest groups in elections.

Bill Bolling spent most of his career in the insurance industry but also had a distinguished career in public service. He was a member and chairman of the Board of Supervisors in Hanover County, VA, then served 10 years in the Virginia State Senate. In 2005 he was elected to serve as the 39th lieutenant governor of Virginia and reelected in 2009, serving with both Democratic and Republican governors. In 2020 he joined the faculties at GMU and Virginia Commonwealth University, where he teaches courses on government and politics.

David Ramadan is an executive and international consultant with more than 25 years of advocacy and government relations experience. He served two terms in the Virginia House of Delegates (2012–2016),

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

representing the 87th district in Loudon and Prince William counties. He holds a PhD from Vanderbilt University and is a professor at the Schar School.

Terry McAuliffe was governor of Virginia from 2014 to 2018. During his term, he focused on growing the state's economy, women's access to health care, public education, environmental protection, voting rights, gun control and secure consumer cyber transactions. He has been active in national politics since age 23, when he was national finance director for President Jimmy Carter. He co-chaired President Bill Clinton's 1996 campaign and chaired Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign. He chaired the Democratic National Committee from 2000 to 2005 and is now a distinguished professor at the Schar School.

4078 Hot Topics: Northern Virginia Public Policy

 Instructor: Mary Hughes Hynes

Friday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/2 – 11/13 (No class on 10/30)

Sessions: 7; Location: Virtual and Recorded

This course will provide a close-up look at several key, but not always high-profile, public policy issues facing northern Virginia. Encore Learning is teaming here with the Regional Elected Leaders Initiative (RELI), a program of the George Mason University (GMU) Schar School of Policy and Government. RELI founder and co-director Mary Hynes will facilitate the course, which will consist of a series of panels and guest speakers addressing the following topics:

1. **Constitutional Amendments** (10/2)
2. **Virginia Clean Economy: Where Are We?** (10/9), moderated by former Arlington County Board member Jay Fisette.
3. **Right to Work** (10/16)
4. **Health Care** (10/23)
5. **New Cannabis Markets** (11/6)
6. **Midterm Election Debrief** (11/13) by Virginia Public

Access Project/GMU's Schar School. This virtual debrief will have been held earlier, on 11/10. Class members will view the event asynchronously.

The 10/9 and 10/23 sessions will be accessed through RELI's Zoom links; they will mix Encore Learning students with local elected officials and other governmental decisionmakers for the content hour; and they will provide an additional question-and-answer session for Encore Learning members. The other sessions will use a consistent link from Encore Learning. No class on 10/30, but members will have access to recordings of two September RELI sessions – one on housing affordability and the other on impacts of tax reform.

Note: The focus of this course will be broader than Arlington County. RELI also includes elected officials in Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties; and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Mary Hughes Hynes was a member of the Arlington County School Board for 12 years; she served three terms as chair. She was on the Arlington County Board for eight years; she served two terms as chair.

VOLUNTEER AS A CLASS AIDE

- Get free parking while attending the class or a complimentary course registration for the next semester.
- Training on use of audio-visual equipment and Zoom.
- Get to know the instructor and your classmates.
- Get to be an integral part of Encore Learning.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*



Literature & Writing

5083 Writing A Memoir: Next Steps

Instructor: Marty Suydam

Friday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

11/6 – 12/11 (No class on 11/27)

Sessions: 5; Location: Virtual and Recorded

This is a course designed as a follow-up to the “Writing a Memoir” course. After getting the memoir writing started, participants are encouraged to “keep writing.” As they develop their stories, they may need a refresher on important lessons, such as working with the technical aspects of their manuscripts and the important lessons of storytelling, organizing and publishing. The classes are structured as 50 percent lecture and 50 percent practical workshop.

Supplemental Materials: *Writing A Memoir*, 2d ed, Marty Suydam. This is the same text used in the Writing A Memoir course.

Marty Suydam is a retired Army Corps of Engineer officer, federal Senior Executive Service member, corporate executive and professor. He has written and published several other books on which he has based Encore Learning courses: *Writing A Memoir*, 2nd ed.; *Walks With Charley: Sniffing Arlington Ridge History and Mystery*, 3rd ed.; *Walk Four Mile Run: A Chain of Parks*, 2nd ed.; and *Walks with The Rambler: A Scrapbook of Arlington, Alexandria, & Fairfax, Virginia From the Lens & Pen of The Rambler 1907–1927*.



5084 Reading War and Peace, Volumes III and IV and Epilogue

Instructor: John Pfordresher

Wednesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

9/30 – 10/28

Sessions: 5; Location: Virtual and Recorded

This course continues the examination of Leo Tolstoy’s classic Russian novel *War and Peace* and will focus on Volumes III and IV and the Epilogue. (Part 1 was offered in the spring 2026 term.) Each of five 90-minute class sessions will consider approximately 115 pages of the novel. These sections focus on 1812 and deal with the French invasion of Russia, France’s occupation of Moscow, the burning of Moscow and the retreat of the French army during the Russian winter. Many of the important characters from the book’s first half reappear, along with some crucially important new characters. This course is for readers new to the novel as well as those who have read it and want to share their experience with classmates.

Recommended Reading: *War and Peace*, Leo Tolstoy, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky.

John Pfordresher, emeritus professor of English at Georgetown University, taught undergraduate and graduate courses in literature and cultural studies for 50 years. He has published books on Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Charlotte Bronte and Catholic Studies. His most recent book, *The Secret History of Jane Eyre*, explores how Charlotte Bronte wrote her masterpiece.

GOT IDEAS

For new courses
or new instructors?

Email them to
info@encorelearning.net

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

5085 Revolutionary Writers and Their Rhetoric

 Instructor: Jenny Sullivan

Tuesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/27 – 12/1 (No class on 11/3)

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

As we continue to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, this course will focus on famous voices of the Revolution in terms of their rhetorical power. We will look at the writings of Jefferson, Crèvecoeur, Franklin, Paine, Freneau and Wheatley.

They were the “influencers” of their day, in large part because they knew how to present ideas persuasively. In their age of Neo-Classicism, they used the tools of the ancients to compose powerful pieces of writing that changed minds, stirred hearts and emboldened people to action. We will examine their skillful use of these rhetorical tools to elevate their expression. That includes everything from Franklin's simple and pleasing aphorisms: “Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise” to Paine's artfully crafted antithetical sentence structures: “Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice.”

In our current era of shouting, vulgar language, acronyms and dreadful grammar, this course will provide an opportunity to review alternative ways of asserting one's opinions. If you admire good writing and you love language, you will enjoy this refreshing look at the rhetorical brilliance of our founding generation. All the reading material will be posted a week in advance.

Jenny Sullivan had a long career in teaching literature in the Virginia Community College System. She is the author of four books: two textbooks, a novel, and a children's book in verse. She has taught a variety of literature courses for Encore Learning.

REMEMBER

check www.encorelearning.net for the most up-to-date information!

5086 Beginning Creative Writing

 Instructor: Carolyn Page

Tuesday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

9/29 – 10/27

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

As the demands of adulthood – work, family, and daily responsibilities – take precedence, creative expression is often set aside. This course is designed to help participants reconnect with and develop that creative voice. Each session includes a short reading and a brief writing exercise to reinforce key concepts.

Session 1: Rediscovering creativity.

Session 2: Reading as an essential tool for writers. Whether the goal is to write fiction or nonfiction, understanding how writing works begins with how one reads. Participants will learn strategies for reading with a writer's perspective.

Session 3: Character development, with an emphasis on transforming “characters” into fully realized people, whether fictional or drawn from real life.

Session 4: Dialogue and attribution, demonstrating how these elements contribute to a rich and engaging narrative.

Session 5: Integration of the course topics, addressing participant questions, and introducing additional subjects of interest, including approaches to publishing.

Carolyn Page, an award-winning writer of fiction, teaches creative writing, playwriting and screenwriting in schools and programs in the D.C. area. She worked for 20 years in the Falls Church Public Schools Adult & Community Education program. She has taught in the Arlington County Adult Education program, at Georgetown University and Northern Virginia Community College. She founded and directed the local The Play's The Thing Theatre Company. She won the PEN/Nelson Algren Fiction Award in 1989, along with a writing residency in Montauk, NY.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

5087 Great American Stories of the 20th Century

 Instructor: Janet Auten

Friday 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

10/16 – 11/20

Sessions: 6; Location: Virtual

What makes a story stand out as “the best”? Does the definition of “best stories” change over time?

This fall we will consider that question as we sample some 20th century American stories that were judged “best” in the year they were published. The stories chosen will come from the 100-year-old annual “Best American Short Stories” series so we can trace what editor Lorrie Moore calls the 20th century journey of the short story. Starting early in the century with Sherwood Anderson, the class will work our way to Z.Z. Packer in 2000.

The course will focus on women’s voices, as usual, but it will include male authors as well. We will read stories, for example, by Edna Ferber, William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, James Baldwin, Flannery O’Connor, Jhumpa Lahiri and Junot Diaz. The six-week, two-hour Zoom class revolves around PowerPoint lectures and shared discussion, questions and conversation during class.

Recommended Reading: *100 Years of the Best American Short Stories*, Lorrie Moore and Heidi Pitlor, eds., 2015.

Janet Auten taught literature and composition courses and directed the Writing Center during her 25 years at American University, where she also developed and team-taught a gender studies course, Women’s Voices Through Time. Her research and publications focus on teaching and 19th-century American women writers. She earned a PhD in composition/American literature and an MA in journalism.

5088 Shakespeare’s Comedies

 Instructor: Michael Collins

Tuesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/20 – 11/17 (No class on 11/3)

Sessions: 4; Location: In-Person

This course will examine the conventions of romantic comedy that were created by Greek dramatists in Athens, worked and reworked by Shakespeare in 15 plays, and employed more than 2,000 years later by script writers in Hollywood. We will then look at two of Shakespeare’s romantic comedies (*Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *As You Like It*), a problem comedy (*The Merchant of Venice*), and a late romance (*The Winter’s Tale*). The discussions will be supplemented by selections from filmed performances of the plays.

Participants are encouraged to read the four comedies prior to the classes in which they will be discussed. Additional readings will be provided on the course webpage.

Michael Collins is teaching professor of English and dean emeritus at Georgetown University. He is editor of *Shakespeare’s Sweet Thunder: Essays on the Early Comedies*; *Reading What’s There: Essays on Shakespeare in Honor of Stephen Booth*; and (with Michael Scott) *Christian Shakespeare: Question Mark*. He has published numerous essays on Shakespeare and regularly reviews productions for the *Shakespeare Bulletin*. He has taught courses for secondary school teachers at the Folger Shakespeare Library and Shakespeare’s Globe in London.

In addition to our courses in the spring and fall semesters, our
Special Events & Clubs run year-round.

See page 32 for more details.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

5089 Poetry of Seamus Heaney: Making "Hope and History Rhyme"

 Instructor: Christopher Griffin

Thursday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/1 – 10/22

Sessions: 4; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

This course will explore some of the best poems of Seamus Heaney (1939–2013), along with recordings and visuals. Heaney won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1995 for “works of lyrical beauty and ethical depth, which exalt everyday miracles and the living past.” Among the most beloved of modern poets, he was also among the most widely read in English following the publication of “Digging,” the first poem in his debut volume *Death of a Naturalist*.

In his writing, Heaney articulated the experience of his vivid childhood sensations on a farm in County Derry and explored political tensions in Northern Ireland, combining personal lyrics with public themes. His poetry expressed the brute realities of history but imagined a future when, as quoted by two U.S. presidents, “The longed-for tidal wave / Of justice can rise up, / And hope and history rhyme.”

For each class session, the instructor will suggest poems from *Opened Ground: Selected Poems, 1966–1996*, essential work from Heaney’s previous books of poetry including the following:

1. *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) and *Door into the Dark* (1969)
2. *Wintering Out* (1972) and *North* (1975)
3. *Field Work* (1976) and *Station Island* (1984)
4. *The Haw Lantern* (1987), *Seeing Things* (1991) and *The Spirit Level* (1996)

Christopher Griffin studied literature at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. He taught courses in Irish literature and history at The George Washington University for eight years. Since 1992 he has taught many classes at Politics and Prose including Shakespeare, Wharton, James, Wilde, Yeats, Joyce, Kavanagh, Heaney and Tóibín. He has been a lecturer on Smithsonian Journeys and at Smithsonian Associates. He has reviewed theatre since the 1970s and written program notes for playbills, including for the Abbey Theatre. He introduced Heaney’s reading at the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1985.

REVIEW/UPDATE

your account information online before registration begins on September 8.

- Note your password for easy access to your account on registration day.
- Choose your desired courses before logging in to register on September 8.
- Register online at 10:00 AM Tuesday, September 8 for your best chance at a seat in a popular course.
- Opt for a course waitlist if the course is filled.
- Complete your online registration and payment within 20 minutes.
- Sit back and wait for classes to begin.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*



Science & Technology

6026 Fact or Fiction: Healthy Skepticism in a Data-Driven World

 **Instructor: Michael Stutts**

Wednesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/7 – 11/4 (No class on 11/4)

Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

Do not be confused or intimidated by data! Confront it, scrutinize it, evaluate it. This course aims to help participants become more informed and discerning consumers of scientific and other data-driven findings that we encounter daily. The instructor, a retired academic clinical psychologist trained in the scientist-practitioner model, will help students gain a working knowledge of the scientific method, the terms and techniques associated with statistics and data analysis, and how these processes can sometimes go awry. Participants will emerge not only more comfortable with these concepts, but also with the healthy skepticism that is at the core of good science.

The course will cover the following topics:

- **The Scientific Method and Process** will explain hypothesis development and testing that is the foundation of scientific inquiry and study.
- **Data and Statistics** will provide an overview of basic statistical concepts and terms (no equations!).
- **Data Analysis** will discuss how scientific data is analyzed, interpreted and presented.
- **Science Done Wrong** will show how science can be done incorrectly due to incompetence, unconscious bias or, occasionally, outright fraud, but also by outside forces distorting or misrepresenting its processes and findings.

Recommended Reading: *How to Lie with Statistics*, Darrell Huff; *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn; *The Undoing Project: A Friendship that Changed Our Minds*, Michael Lewis; *Statistics Done Wrong: The*

Woefully Complete Guide, Alex Reinhart; *The Art of Statistical Thinking*, Albert Rutherford and Jae Kim.

Michael Stutts earned a PhD in clinical psychology from the University of Louisville, followed by an internship at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and fellowship training in clinical neuropsychology at Virginia Commonwealth University/Medical College of Virginia. His patient care, research and teaching at Eastern Virginia Medical School focused on clinical/geriatric neuropsychology and rehabilitation psychology. He retired from EVMS as professor emeritus in 2018 after a 33-year career.

6027 Exploring the Solar System: Our “Backyard” in Space

 **Instructor: Michael Summers**

Thursday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/15 – 12/3 (No class on 11/5 and 11/26)

Sessions: 6; Location: GMU

The NASA Apollo missions of the 1960s marked humanity’s first bold step beyond Earth. While human spaceflight slowed after Apollo until the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station eras, robotic missions surged ahead, transforming our understanding of the solar system. Spacecraft have explored all nine classical planets, many moons, asteroids, comets, regions near the sun, and even beyond Pluto. These discoveries reveal a solar system far more dynamic and resource-rich (water, organic compounds, and metals) than once imagined, opening the door to a future in space.

Today, we are poised to take the next steps. With advanced knowledge and technology, we can map resources and plan human missions and eventual settlements on the Moon, Mars, the asteroid belt, and beyond. Key resources are already within reach: water for life support and fuel, and materials for construction and manufacturing. The Moon may hold Helium-3 for future energy, while subsurface lava tubes on the Moon and Mars could shelter early habitats.

This course will review what we have learned from human and robotic space exploration of the solar system, with a focus on the discoveries made with relevance for the human colonization of space. Each lecture will focus on

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

one aspect of the solar system, what we have learned and what is planned for future missions. Finally, we will discuss some of the possible scientific and societal consequences for humanity as we begin to move away from humanity's birth planet and colonize the galaxy.

The course will consist of six sessions, each 90 minutes long, focused on the following themes:

1. The Moon and Near-Earth Environment
2. The Inner Planets: Mercury and Venus
3. Mars: Exploration and Colonization
4. The Asteroid Belt and Comets: Rich in Resources
5. The Outer Solar System: Giant Planets and their Moons
6. The Kuiper Belt: A Hundred Thousand Dwarf Ice Planets

Michael Summers is a planetary scientist who investigates the structure and evolution of planetary atmospheres. He has participated in several NASA rocket, space shuttle, satellite and deep space robotic missions to other planets. He was a mission co-investigator on the NASA/New Horizons Spacecraft Mission to Pluto and the Kuiper Belt. He teaches astronomy and astrobiology at George Mason University.

6041 Generative Artificial Intelligence: Exploring Tools, Techniques and Critical Thinking

 Instructor: Barbara Fillip

Thursday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/8 – 11/19 (No class on 11/5)

Sessions: 6; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

Curious about Generative Artificial Intelligence and how it differs from other AI? There is a lot to learn and keep up with as GenAI tools continue to evolve rapidly. This course will introduce you to tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude and Perplexity, and show how they can support research, writing, learning and organizing information. No

technical background is required — just curiosity and a willingness to experiment.

You will learn how to:

- Recognize the strengths and limits of generative AI
- Match your goals to the right tool, from ChatGPT to Perplexity
- Apply critical thinking in generating queries and evaluating AI-generated responses
- Use prompting techniques to get more useful and reliable results

Topics and use cases include:

- Travel planning and itinerary design
- Technology troubleshooting
- Creative pursuits such as writing and visual arts
- Financial, legal and medical research (with added caution)

We will also discuss the broader impacts of generative AI: the opportunities it opens up, the risks it introduces and how to use it responsibly.

This course was first offered in spring 2026 and will be updated, as needed, for fall 2026 in order to keep up with the evolution of generative AI tools. The weekly sessions will be complemented by a series of opt-in (optional) Zoom-only Q&A sessions, during which participants can drop in to ask questions.

The instructor will provide a list of resources on the course webpage when class begins.

Barbara Fillip earned a PhD in international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh, a Project Management Professional certification and a Permaculture Teacher certificate. She spent two decades supporting individual, team, project and organization-wide learning in two industries: international development and aerospace. She has taught adults in organizational and academic settings, completing seven years as an adjunct faculty member in the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. She is currently exploring the future of aging, longevity and sustainability through creative writing and AgeTech technology solutions that support lifelong learning and well-being.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

6046 Chemistry Matters: Making the Invisible Visible!

 **Instructor:** Reva Savkar

Tuesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/6 – 10/27

Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

This course will take chemistry “out of the textbook” and into your life whether you are an avid student of science or have not given a thought to chemistry since high school. Chemistry is the study of the physical, chemical and nuclear properties and changes of matter and the accompanying energy changes. The universe and everything in your life is made of matter and energy. Understanding chemistry serves as the gateway to understanding the other physical and natural sciences that influence and inform our past, present and future: geology, oceanography, physics, astronomy, botany, zoology, neuroscience, the medical sciences and technology. It is the science of everything that matters!

Through relatable examples, thought-provoking anecdotes and awe-inspiring facts, the instructor provides an opportunity to discover more about the world in which we live. You may even gain new perspectives on your own life experiences.

This course will consist of four sessions:

- 1. Molecules of Life:** Proteins, carbohydrates, fats, DNA & RNA, vitamins and minerals and the chemistry of cooking.
- 2. Periodic Tales:** Gems, polymers, colors of hydrangeas, art, conservation and more.
- 3. First Ladies of Science:** Innovation, breakthroughs and lasting legacies.
- 4. Chemistry On the Horizon:** “Forever chemicals,” synthetic drugs, gene therapy and energy (fission, fusion, and renewables)

Reva Savkar was born in India, earned an MS in organic chemistry, got married and moved to the U.S. While raising her two children, she taught chemistry part-time at Northern Virginia Community College. In 1989 she

earned an MS in computer science at Virginia Tech and joined NVCC full-time. She taught chemistry and computer science for 28 years and received numerous teaching awards. She retired in 2017.

6047 Education and Employment in the AI Era

 **Instructor:** Steve Shapiro

Tuesday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

9/29 – 10/27

Sessions: 5; Location: GMU

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) has already had significant impacts on education policies and practices. It has also begun to affect the labor market, especially the entry-level white-collar occupations. This course will blend concepts related to pedagogy, cognitive psychology, economics, psychometrics and sociology to explain how learning and labor may evolve over the next decade. We will explore:

- How children learn
- How technology is infiltrating the learning environment
- How learning and cognition are measured (for both people and AI models)
- How AI holds both promise and perils for the learning process
- What types of tasks are well suited for AI-based automation
- How employers are reacting to the potential impacts of AI

Steve Shapiro has taught several courses for Encore Learning including the AI session for the Technology Hot Spots course in 2024. He also is the coordinator of the Tech Hobbyist Club and the Current Events Club. He studied economics at Tufts University and then did graduate studies in management at the Sloan School at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. For 25 years he served as an executive and management consultant for many technology-centric businesses in the DC area. Then he taught high school math in Fairfax County for 15 years. The course will reflect his experiences as both a business manager and classroom teacher.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

6048 Autumn Nature and History Ambles In and Around Arlington

 **Instructor: Multiple**

Thursday 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

10/22 – 11/19

Sessions: 5; Location: Offsite at Various Locations In Arlington

As the temperatures begin to cool and the autumn colors set in, here is the chance to get a little exercise while we take a series of ambles to discover some of the hidden natural and historic gems in the parks in the Arlington area. During this series of 90-minute excursions, three Arlington naturalists and a historian will guide would-be explorers as we check out various natural and historic sites in search of migrating animals and birds, changing leaves and just the enjoyment of the beauty of the fall season. Each site will offer its unique set of flora, fauna and scenery. The session leaders have chosen personal favorite parks to share. These outings will offer enough variety to excite even the most finicky explorer. Join us this fall to explore these local treasures — our parks and nature preserves.

All sessions will include 90 minutes of easy walking, unless otherwise noted. Most walks will be 1.5 miles or less. The Theodore Roosevelt Walk may be a bit more; the perimeter walk is longer but flat. The classes will go on, light rain or shine. However, classes will be canceled if rains are heavy or there are unsafe weather conditions. Wear study walking shoes; bring water.

Parking is free at all sites. Some parks are now charging a special fee for groups over 12 in number. If that is the case, Encore Learning will cover the expense. Unless noted, parks are not near public transportation stops.

Session 1: Jerome “Buddie” Ford Nature Center/Dora Kelley Nature Park, Alexandria (Nayeli Arellano, 10/22)

Location: 5750 Sanger Ave, Alexandria, VA. This 50-acre park has 1 mile of nature trails that follow along Holmes Run, a relaxing way to explore a mostly shaded trail. Expect some sloping trails and steps but mostly paved nature trail. We will park/meet at the nature center. Both the nature center and restrooms are open until 4 p.m.

Note: The Alexandria Dash bus 35 runs between Van Dorn and Pentagon metro stations every 10 minutes.

This route stops at Beauregard and Sanger, a 10-minute walk from the nature center.

Session 2: Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Alexandria (Gabby Hrycyshyn, 10/29)

Location: Belle Haven Road, Alexandria, VA. We will meet at Belle Haven Park, near the public restroom building. Most know this area as the parking area for the Mount Vernon Trail. The start is located just a short walk from the trailhead to the Dyke Marsh Trail that explores a 485-acre tidal marsh along the Potomac River. The trail is a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long (one-way) combination pea gravel and boardwalk trail. If the day is sunny, there will be much full exposure to the sun, so hats and water are recommended. Binoculars recommended, too. Restrooms available at Belle Haven.

Session 3: Scotts Run Nature Preserve, Great Falls (Rob Barnovsky, 11/5)

The trail is $\frac{1}{2}$ mile (one-way; we will do a round-trip) that starts out very flat along Scotts Run, but ends up at a hill that goes up and down as you approach the Potomac River, ending in a beautiful vista. When we approach the river, we will be greeted by a view of the closest natural waterfall near D.C. The hill can be a bit rough/steep, but it is worth it for the view and we will take our time. No restrooms readily available and no water sources for drinking. Bring water with you. Two stream crossings across flat stones.

Directions and Meeting Place: Scotts Run Nature Preserve. Location: 7400 Georgetown Pike (VA-193), McLean, VA. We will meet at the end (near the swing gate) of the large parking lot across from Swinks Mill Road, not the entrance near I-495. Scotts Run’s parking can be limited at times but is not usually bad on weekdays. You may want to consider carpooling. Sturdy shoes recommended. Binoculars helpful at times.

Session 4: Roosevelt Island (Blake Lindsey, 11/12)

Although the island looks like it developed naturally, it was designed by landscape architects at the Olmsted Brothers firm and cleared, graded and replanted by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Join our historian, Blake Lindsey, to explore the 2.5 miles of trails through boardwalked swamps, marshes and woodlands and discover what grows in those habitats. The entrance to the park is from the northbound George Washington Parkway or via a 10-to-15-minute downhill walk from the Rosslyn

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

Metro. We will meet at the bridge by the parking lot. Restrooms available onsite.

Session 5: Huntley Meadows Park (Itzamar Cruz, 11/19)
Location: 3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria, VA. We will meet at the parking lot near the trail leading to the nature center. This walk will take us on dirt and board-walked trails leading through the large freshwater marsh where birds and scenic areas abound. A great place to bring binoculars as well as a hat and water. The nature center and restrooms should be open and available for use.

Nayeli Arellano has been a park naturalist at Long Branch Nature Center since November 2025. Previously, she worked at Hidden Oaks Nature Center as a naturalist for 2.5 years. While working there, she earned a degree in Environmental Science and Policy with a concentration in Conservation from George Mason University.

Gabby Hrycyshyn, a naturalist at Gulf Branch Nature Center, has a bachelor's degree in biology from Penn State University, a master's degree in interdisciplinary ecology from the University of Florida and a master's certificate in project management from The George Washington University. She worked with the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia and trained at the Minnesota Raptor Center, the Linwood Springs Research Center in Wisconsin and Boise State University. Before coming to Arlington, she worked for the Fairfax County Park Authority and has extensive experience working with birds of prey, including owls and hawks at Potomac Overlook Regional Park.

Rob Barnovsky is a naturalist at Long Branch Nature Center. He has a bachelor's degree in biology and has worked as a naturalist in the eastern United States and at a raptor rehabilitation center in Ohio. He was an interpretive ranger for the National Park Service at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the first-ever naturalist for the city of Jacksonville, FL. He has also worked as a naturalist and natural resources specialist for Fairfax and Loudoun counties. He has been doing environmental education in public parks for more than 34 years.

Blake Lindsey is an Arlington County park historian at the Civil War Visitor Center. He was previously employed in public history at Ford's Theatre and the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center. His writing on the D.C. area's Civil War history has been featured in publications across the country.

Itzamar Cruz is a park naturalist at Gulf Branch Nature Center in Arlington. She is passionate about connecting communities, particularly urban populations, to nature. In her current role, she uses her background in environmental science and anthropology to conduct nature programs for diverse audiences. Her career has been dedicated to the D.C. area as well as New York City.

6049 Climate Change Around the World

  Instructor: Ron Edelstein

Monday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/19 – 12/7

Sessions: 8; Location: Virtual and Recorded

This course begins with an overview of the science of climate change, examining what is changing, why it is happening and the evidence that current trends are primarily driven by human activity rather than natural causes.

We will then explore the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement, including efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C (and no more than 2°C) above pre-industrial levels. With current warming already at approximately 1.3°C, we will consider the potential consequences of exceeding these thresholds, including the possibility of climate “tipping points” and their implications for long-term recovery. Strategies for reducing atmospheric CO₂ and reversing temperature increases will also be discussed.

We continue with a discussion of how major countries are responding to climate change, assess progress toward Paris Agreement commitments and examine the challenges that have hindered success.

The final session features an interactive climate solutions exercise using the En-ROADS simulation model. Participants will take on the role of decision-makers, exploring policy choices and their potential impact on the future of the global climate.

Ron Edelstein has 50 years of experience as an engineer working on gas turbines (Pratt & Whitney), solar energy R&D (DOE consultant and senior engineer at the Solar Energy Research Institute working on solar thermal R&D), and natural gas R&D (Gas Research Institute). Since retirement, he has taught energy and climate

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

change courses through the Osher Lifelong Living Institute. He earned degrees in Aerospace Engineering, Engineering Science-Solid Mechanics and Engineering Science-Environmental Science and Technology. He also trained as a “climate ambassador” for the Climate Interactive En-ROADS climate solutions model.

NEW LOGIN INFORMATION

Encore Learning is launching a new member and registration portal! You will be notified in early August to setup your user account. Watch your email for a link to create your username and password. If you don't see this email, go to Encore Learning's homepage (www.encorelearning.net), click LOGIN and you will be brought to the sign in page where you can Sign in or Create an Account. Once you login, you can verify your membership status, and if necessary, renew your membership. **Be sure to create your account in advance of fall registration.** More details to come about our new and improved system!



Social Sciences

7043 Genealogy: Brick Walls and Questions

 Instructor: Roy DeLauder

Tuesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

11/10 – 12/1

Sessions: 4; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

What do you do when your family history, or genealogy, research runs into a proverbial “brick wall” or when your research leads have petered out? Would you like a fresh set of eyes to help advance your research?

This class will be a workshop aimed at answering some common questions and problems found when conducting family history research. We will look at and discuss some of the common brick walls and offer some potential workarounds. Students will be asked to provide specific research problems and challenges they have encountered for discussion in class.

One of the most common questions asked by new researchers is, “What do I do with the information once I have collected it?” We will devote a class session to this topic. Another commonly asked question is, “How do I do research in a foreign country?” This will be the focus of the second session. The other two sessions will concentrate on the specific challenges and questions students have experienced when conducting their research. Join us to enhance your research skills and find new approaches to unlock your family's history!

Roy De Lauder has a BA in history from Clemson University and an MS in systems management from the University of Southern California. He is a retired U.S. Navy surface warfare officer and a retired equipment manager for a government contractor. He has been doing genealogy as a hobby for more than 40 years.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

7044 What's Love Got to Do With It? Cross-Cultural Notions of Romantic Love

 Instructor: Laura Ahearn

Wednesday 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

10/14 – 11/4

Sessions: 4; Location: GMU

In this course, we will use an anthropological lens to explore the many meanings surrounding romantic love as it is experienced and expressed in this country and cross-culturally. We will analyze underlying ideologies of love in song lyrics, love letters and everyday conversations in the U.S. and around the world. We will discuss different generations' experiences with, and ideas about, romantic love; the relationship of romantic love to sex and marriage; different types of marriage (arranged, capture, elopement, etc.); and cultural similarities and differences in the expression of emotions. In addition to learning about romantic practices in places such as Nepal, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, we will explore letters, guidebooks and other documents from past centuries.

Class sessions will be a combination of lecture, small group work and discussion. The topics for each session are as follows:

1. Introduction to the anthropological study of romantic love, professional versus romantic narratives, and analysis of love songs.
2. Case study from Nepal about love letters.
3. Historical and contemporary examples of romantic relationships; Gen Z (born 1997 to 2012) attitudes toward love; and nontraditional love relationships such as polyamory.
4. The future of romantic love, including AI chatbots as romantic companions.

Independent Reading: Modern Loves: The Anthropology of Romantic Courtship and Companionate Marriage, Jennifer Hirsch and Holly Wardlow, eds.; *Invitations to Love: Literacy, Love Letters, and Social Change in Nepal*, Laura Ahearn; *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*, Lila Abu-Lughod; "The People Who Marry Chatbots," Amogh Dimri, *The Atlantic*; "Teens

Are Forgoing a Classic Rite of Passage," Faith Hill, *The Atlantic*; "Is Having a Boyfriend Embarrassing Now?" Chanté Joseph, *Vogue*; "He's gay. She's straight. They're happily married," Shane O'Neill, *Washington Post*.

Laura Ahearn earned a PhD in anthropology from the University of Michigan and was a tenured professor at Rutgers University. In addition to the book cited above, she is the author of numerous scholarly articles and *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*, translated into Chinese, Polish and Spanish. She has conducted research on romantic love, agency and female literacy in Nepal, where she was a Peace Corps volunteer and then anthropology researcher.

7045 Global Migration and US Immigration Policy: Where Reality and Fantasy Collide

  Instructor: Robert Albro

Monday 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

10/19 – 11/23

Sessions: 6; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

Immigration has long been the subject of contentious and polarizing policy debate in the United States. If the current administration's approach to immigration policy and enforcement has generated controversy, it is only the most recent to do so, and will surely not be the last. This course examines the larger U.S. immigration story against the background of international migration policy. It dwells on an apparent contradiction: on the one hand, among our country's most repeated foundational stories is that, to quote John F. Kennedy, our country is "a nation of immigrants"; on the other hand, the fact of immigration has repeatedly raised still unresolved questions about who belongs, paths to citizenship, economic fairness and, at times, racism and xenophobia. Perhaps more than any other issue, immigration has been at the center of how we have understood the "American experiment."

The course will take us through some of the high and low points of how people and policies have either rejected, or sought to come to terms with, the realities of immigration on the ground. We will cover multiple historical phases of the U.S. response to immigration of specific immigrant groups from Europe, Latin America and elsewhere. We will focus

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

on some of the policy and integration challenges connected with immigration, but also the evident advantages of regular in-migration for the economy, U.S. society, culture and innovation. We will discuss legal and policy differences between migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; and how these have mattered for people coming to the U.S. We will also look at how U.S. responses to immigration are at once distinct and also comparable to responses in Europe and elsewhere to unanticipated surges of new arrivals. Ultimately, how has immigration shaped our past, and what is the promise of immigration for our collective future?

Supplemental Readings: "Immigration Myths Die Hard," Ernesto Castañeda, Center for Latin American and Latino Studies; "What is a migrant? What is ICE? 10 terms to help you understand the debate over immigration," Ernesto Castañeda and Daniel Jenks, *The Conversation*; "Climate Disaster, Human Displacement, and the Risks of Non-Economic Loss for Latin America and the Caribbean," Robert Albro, CLALS; "A New Look at Immigrants' Outsize Contributions to Innovation in the U.S.," Katie Savchuk, *Insights by Stanford Business*; "How Europe is Slowly Closing Its Doors to Asylum-Seekers," Kevin Appleby, Center for Migration Studies.

Robert Albro received a PhD in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Chicago. He is associate director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies at American University, where his long-term focus has been urban and indigenous politics in Bolivia, as in his book *Roosters at Midnight: Indigenous Signs and Stigma in Local Bolivian Politics*. More recently, he has researched and published on the intersections of cultural policy with climate change, science and technology, human rights and public diplomacy. He is the recipient of grants and fellowships from the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress and the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs.

FALL REGISTRATION BEGINS

10:00 AM Tuesday, September 8, 2026

7046 Population Trends Shaking Your World

   Instructor: Multiple

Wednesday 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

10/7 – 10/28

Sessions: 4; Location: Hybrid and Recorded

Crackdowns on immigration, the rising importance of the Latino vote and plunging birthrates are making news. Meanwhile, the U.S. population is projected to decline for the first time since the nation's founding. Learn more about the demographic forces behind these headline issues and their impacts. This course will examine the history, causes and implications of major population patterns reshaping the U.S., with some international context.

Three sessions will focus on top drivers reshaping the nation's population — immigration, racial and ethnic change, and ups and downs by age group. The fourth will look at the growing challenge of collecting accurate population data.

Each class will be taught by a different expert, mainly presenting on Zoom. Encore Learning member D'Vera (Dee) Cohn, who wrote about immigration and demographics for *The Washington Post* and Pew Research Center, will be in the classroom to manage the discussion and questions. Additional reading material will be offered. *Note:* The order of session topics may change.

Session 1: Immigration: How Did We Get Here and What Is Happening Now? (Jeffrey Passel, 10/7)

Recent dizzying changes in immigration policy are fueling headlines about birthright citizenship, illegal immigration, labor shortages and more. For the first time in more than 50 years, the number of U.S. immigrants has declined, with important implications for the future. Beyond the headlines, this class will look broadly at the history of U.S. immigration, as well as recent changes in where immigrants come from, how they got here and their legal status.

Session 2: How Is Racial and Ethnic Change Remaking the U.S.? (William Frey, 10/14)

The nation's Latino, Asian and multiracial populations are growing rapidly, the Black population is spreading out and the White population is slowly shrinking. These changes will continue even with restrictions on U.S. immigration.

Fall 2026 Course Descriptions *continued*

This class digs into how these forces are transforming the makeup of different age groups, communities and regions, as well as influencing the nation's politics.

Session 3: Shrinking Births and Surging Senior Population (Beth Jarosz, 10/21)

Maternity hospitals and under-enrolled colleges are closing, while senior housing is booming. There is a reason for that: births are declining and the 65-plus population is rising. Within a few years, older adults will outnumber children in this country. There are consequences for education, the labor force, pension funds, etc. This class will explore the complex reasons for and implications of these trends.

Session 4: How Are Population Numbers Collected and Can We Trust Them? (Nancy Potok and Elizabeth Hardy, 10/28)

The national census is an elaborately choreographed operation with results that influence government programs, business decisions and more. But more Americans are unwilling to respond to the census, and to surveys in general. There also are political challenges to census operations and rising costs. This class will look at how the federal government collects population data and possible innovations (some controversial). Arlington's chief demographer will supply a local perspective on how the county uses population statistics and promotes census participation.

Jeffrey Passel is a senior demographer at Pew Research Center. He is a nationally known expert on immigration to the United States, including its history, geography and economic impact. He developed widely accepted estimates of U.S. unauthorized immigration. Previously, he was principal research associate at the Urban Institute and held various positions at the U.S. Census Bureau.

William Frey is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, where his research topics include urban areas, migration, race and political demographics. He also is a research professor at the University of Michigan. A revised version of his book *Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics are Remaking America*, published in 2015, is scheduled for release this year.

Beth Jarosz is a senior fellow at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy and vice

president of the Association of Public Data Users. Previously, she was a senior program director at the Population Reference Bureau, overseeing projects on demographic, sociological and health trends.

Nancy Potok was chief statistician of the United States in the executive office of the president, Census Bureau deputy director and chief operating officer, and Department of Commerce deputy undersecretary for economic affairs. She is CEO at NAPx Consulting and active in American Statistical Association projects on the health of the federal statistical system.

Elizabeth Hardy is principal planner and demographer for Arlington County's Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development. She worked on the county's 2010 and 2020 Census promotion campaigns. She has a BS from George Mason University and a master of urban and regional planning from Virginia Tech.

Now you've read about
all 42 courses being offered,
are you ready to
register on September 8?

**REFER
A FRIEND!**

You are our best source
of information for
prospective members.

Simply refer them to our website
www.EncoreLearning.net

Encore Learning Special Events & Clubs

Encore Learning's special events and clubs provide a variety of activities to complement our academic course offerings. Our special events and clubs run year-round, so no need to wait to become a member! All special events are announced by email and are posted on our website. Email our office at info@encorelearning.net to subscribe to our special event email announcements or to join a club.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Encore Learning Presents — Co-sponsored with the Arlington Public Library

Encore Learning Presents events are open to the public and include lectures, panels and film screenings. Recent presentations have included discussions with documentary filmmakers Peter Harnik and Aviva Kempner, Dan Sherman on Hamilton the Man and the Musical, and deep dives on topics such as the War Powers Resolution, privacy issues in a world of mass surveillance and horse race handicapping. These events are free and can be virtual, in-person or hybrid. They are usually scheduled from 3:00 to 4:30 PM on Monday afternoons. Visit Encore Learning's YouTube channel for a list of previous events and to view recordings. Note: not all Encore Learning Presents events are recorded.

For Members: Tours of Museums, Historical Sights and More

We also offer group tours as a benefit of membership. Recent tours have included New Deal Art Murals in the Cohen and Clinton Federal buildings, the National Inventors Hall of Fame, special exhibits at the National Gallery of Art and Smithsonian American Art Museum, Hillwood Gardens and much more. Upcoming tours include local organic Area 2 Farms, the DEA Museum and Lincoln's Cottage.

Many member events are free, although some may require tickets, entrance or other fees. Check event listings for details and to register for these member events. Events requiring registration are for members only.

CLUBS

Another benefit of membership is the opportunity to expand your social network with other members who have similar interests. We currently have 12 clubs that promote lifelong learning, personal growth, physical activity and social engagement. Club membership is open to all current Encore Learning members. Club membership is free, but some club activities might involve visiting a location (e.g., restaurant, museum, kayak rental, movie

theater) that charges a fee. Please visit our Clubs page on our website for more club details. Contact the office at info@encorelearning.net with questions or to join a club.

Breakfast Club — Meets weekly for breakfast and lively conversation at La Madeleine in Falls Church.

Bridge Club — Meets monthly for light refreshments and to play social bridge.

Chamber Music Club — Attends Friday Morning Music Club's free noon concerts the first and second Friday of the months of October through May, at St. George's Church in Arlington.

Cinema Club — Meets monthly at the movies and discusses the film afterwards at lunch.

Current Issues Discussion Group — Meets twice a month virtually to discuss a topic that has been chosen by club members. Discussions are always polite and insightful, and participation is encouraged.

Global Lunch Club — Meets monthly to enjoy the area's great global cuisine. Twenty to 30 members come together at a local restaurant for a social and culinary adventure.

Improv Club — Meets a few times per month when classes are not in session. No experience needed, just an open mind and a willingness to play.

Kayak Club — Meets twice a month May – October at Fletcher's Boathouse. Novice and experienced kayakers are welcome to join for fun adventures on the Potomac. No equipment needed.

Mindfulness Club — Meets virtually weekly for meditation, discussion and exploration of the mindfulness tradition.

Nonfiction Book Club — Meets bimonthly at Arlington Central Library for lively discussions about nonfiction works chosen by club members.

Tech Hobbyist Club — Enjoy tinkering with new technology? The Tech Hobbyist club meets virtually weekly.

Travel Club — Meets virtually monthly to hear presentations about members' fascinating travels and discusses travel related topics. Recent discussions have included presentations on members' favorite trips.

Board, Committee Members & Staff

Thank you to the Encore Learning

Board • Academic Programs Committee • Publications Committee • Staff
for all of the hard work and dedication in preparing for the Fall 2026 semester.



2026–2027 Encore Learning Board

Marilyn Marton, *President*
Mildred Patterson, *Vice President*
Barry Ginsberg, *Vice President*
Steven Shapiro, *Treasurer*
Joan Carter, *Secretary*
Thomas C. Adams, *Ex Officio*
Susan Bornstein, *Academic Programs Committee Co-Chair*
Deborah Spero, *Academic Programs Committee Co-Chair*
John Metzler, *Class Aides Committee Co-Chair*
Michael Stutts, *Class Aides Committee Co-Chair*
David Briggs, *Community Advisory Council Chair*
Barbara Fillip, *Information Technology Committee Co-Chair*
Iolaire McFadden, *Information Technology Committee Co-Chair*
Lynn Ray, *Membership Committee Chair*
Ann Kaupp, *Publications Committee Co-Chair*
Bill Reilly, *Publications Committee Co-Chair*
Louise Kenny, *Special Events Committee Chair*
Jane Nagy, *Volunteer Committee Chair*

Encore Learning Staff

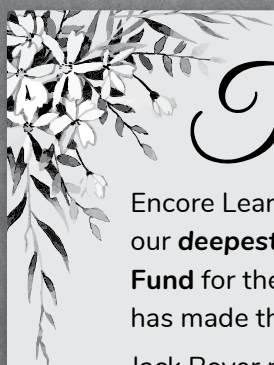
Lora Pollari-Welbes, *Executive Director*
Patty Rowland, *Administrator*
Kerry Fraatz, *Academic Course Coordinator*
Donna Banks, *Virtual Class Administrator*

Academic Programs Committee

Susan Bornstein, *Co-Chair*
Deborah Spero, *Co-Chair*
Tom Adams
Jutta Bauman
Mary Kay Davis
Karen Christensen
Peter French
Keith Klein
Jeanne LaBella
Catherine McCormick
Geerten Michielse
Ed Rader
Wendy Swanson

Publications Committee

Ann Kaupp, *Co-Chair*
Bill Reilly, *Co-Chair*
Kevin Connors
Diane Duston
Jerry Hoganson
Kathy LaPier
Jim Morris
Noreen Quill



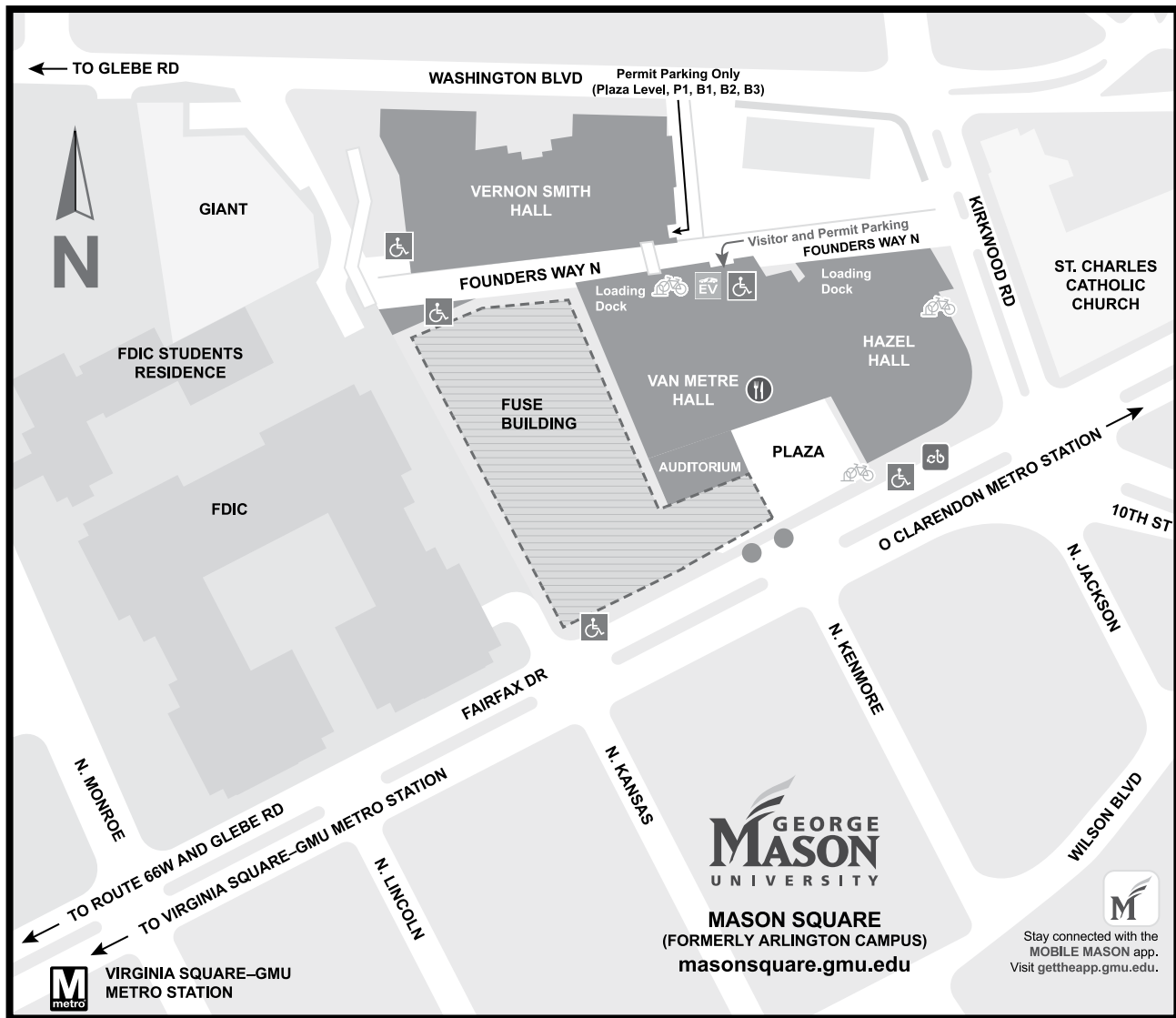
Thank You

Encore Learning extends
our **deepest gratitude** to the **Royer
Fund** for the generous donation, which
has made this printed catalog possible.

Jack Royer passed away
September 9, 2024.

Locations and Maps of Course Sites

George Mason University (GMU)

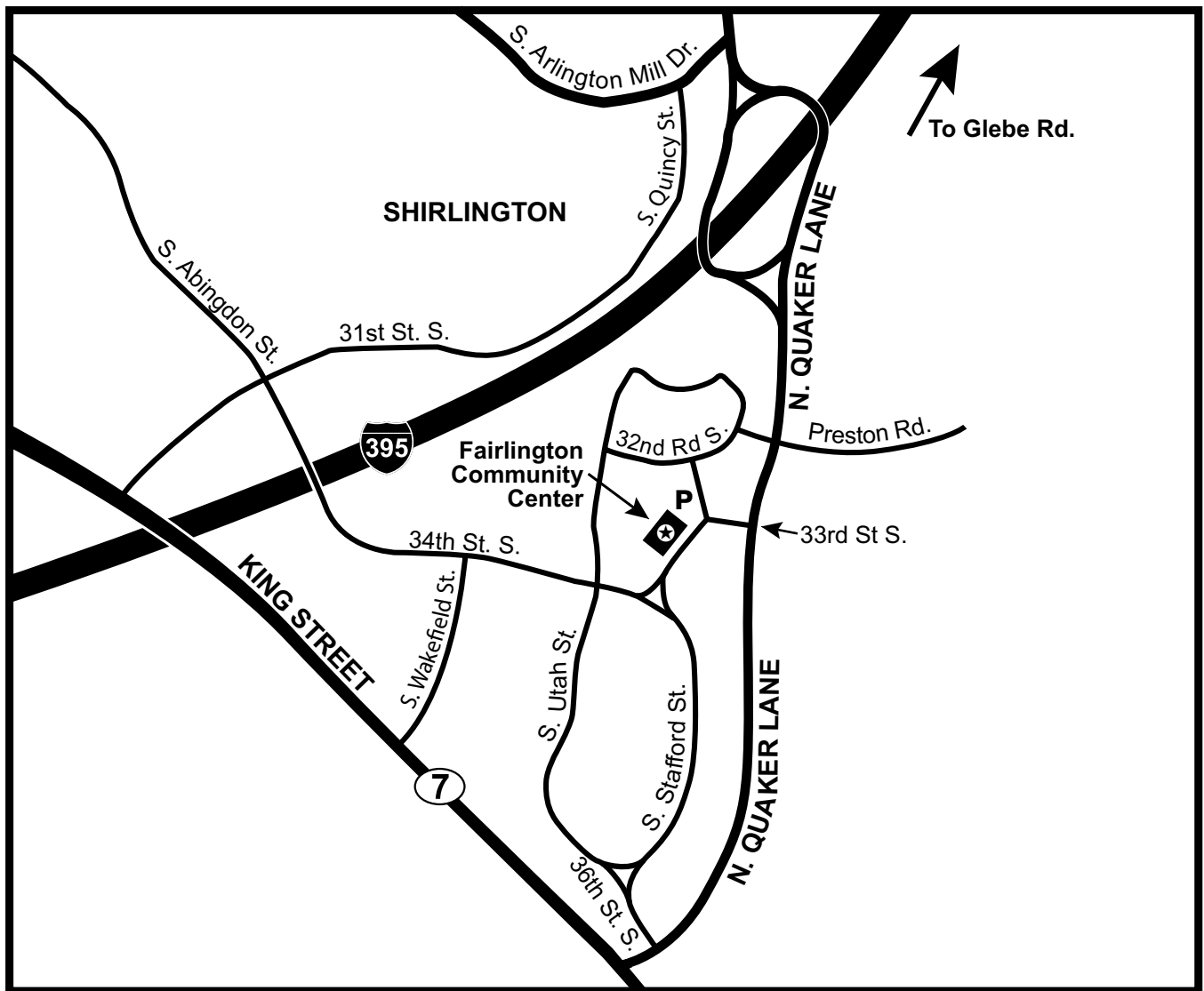


GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY, ARLINGTON CAMPUS – 3351 Fairfax Dr., 22201

The Van Metre Hall garage is the only garage on campus open to visitors; the rate is \$5 per hour or \$9 for two hours and the entrance is off N. Kirkwood Rd. Parking in the garage requires an account to be set up with Metropolis at <https://www.metropolis.io/parking>. Four-hour metered parking is available along the median on Fairfax Dr. near St. Charles Church and on N. Lincoln St. One- and two-hour metered parking is available on other surrounding streets. For more information on parking, visit: <https://transportation.gmu.edu/arlington-campus/>

PARKING COSTS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT

Fairlington Community Center (FCC)



FAIRLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER — 3308 South Stafford St., 22206

Free parking on adjacent lot. Limited street parking is available.

OTHER OFFSITE COURSE LOCATIONS

For information on additional offsite course locations please see the course description or visit <https://encorelearning.net/courses/locations/>

HELP SPREAD THE WORD about Encore Learning



Don't toss out this catalog!

If you're done with it, consider passing it along to a neighbor, friend, fellow club member, or anyone who might appreciate all that Encore Learning has to offer.

Keeping your copy?

Clip the section below to share the joy of Encore Learning with someone else.



Welcoming Everyone Over 50 To Classes, Clubs And Events

Power Up Your Brain! Learn Something New!

Encore Learning, a nonprofit organization founded in 2002 for those over 50, offers a wide range of more than 80 noncredit courses in the fall and spring. The courses cover fine arts, theater, music....health and wellness....politics, public affairs....literature and writing....science and technology....and the social sciences, all taught by leading experts from universities, government, nonprofits and corporations. More than 50 Special Events a year feature notable speakers, panel discussions and film screenings.

Find out more and join our growing community of active, interesting and friendly neighbors over 50! Members live in Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, DC and wherever you Zoom. Scan the QR code or go to www.encorelearning.net.

Meet Your Neighbors! Make New Friends!

Encore Learning is a gateway to fun! Make new friends and meet new neighbors who share your interests. Share ideas! Engage in lively discussions during classes and Special Events. Join a Specialty Club! There are 12 clubs to choose from: breakfast, bridge, chamber music, cinema, current issues, global lunch, improv, kayak, mindfulness, nonfiction books, tech hobbyist, and travel. Volunteer! Our treasured volunteers power every aspect of our organization.



Encore Learning Fall 2026 Courses: Calendar View

 Virtual classes are noted with the camera icon.
  In-Person classes are noted with the people icon.
  Recorded classes are noted with the microphone icon.

 Hybrid classes include an option to register for either an in-person class at Mason or a virtual class on Zoom. For in-person course locations, check our online catalog.

	M	T	W	TH	F
MORNING	 10–11:30 AM 2028 – Living Healthier in Retirement Bickford 10/5–11/23 (skip 10/12)	 10–11:30 AM 5086 – Beginning Creative Writing Page 9/29–10/27	   10:15–11:30 AM 3107 – Making of Irish New York Anbinder 10/7–11/11	  10–11:30 AM 3104 – A Brief History of Language Manteuffel 10/1–10/22	 10–11:30 AM 1055 – Never Too Old to Play Pilloff 10/9–11/6
	  10–11:30 AM 6049 – Climate Change around the World Edelstein 10/19–12/7	 10–11:30 AM 4077 – Midterm Elections Multiple 10/20–11/17 (skip 11/3)	 10–11:30 AM 7044 – Cross-Cultural Romantic Love Ahearn 10/14–11/4	   10–11:30 AM 6041 – Generative Artificial Intelligence Fillip 10/8–11/19 (skip 11/5)	 10–11:30 AM 4074 – Inside the IMF Michielse 10/9–11/20 (skip 10/30)
	   10–11:30 AM 3106 – Fall of the Roman Republic Timko 11/2–12/7	 10–11:30 AM 2030 – Emotional Health and Connections Rehman 11/10–12/1		 10–11:30 AM 2003 – Estate Planning Basics Shaar/Park 11/5–12/3 (skip 11/26)	 10–12:00 PM 5087 – Great American Stories of the 20th Century Auten 10/16–11/20
					  10–11:30 AM 5083 – Writing A Memoir: Next Steps Suydam 11/6–12/11 (skip 11/27)
NOON	 12–1:30 PM 1069 – Classic vs. Contemporary Plays Klein Harber 9/28–11/9 (skip 10/12)	 12–1:30 PM 6047 – Education and Employment in the AI Era Shapiro 9/29–10/27	   12–1:30 PM 3109 – Massive Resistance in Virginia Fogarty 9/30–10/21	  12–1:30 PM 1068 – The Magic Behind Film Music, Part 1 Agron 10/1–11/12 (skip 10/29)	  12–1:30 PM 4078 – Hot Policy Topics in Virginia Hynes 10/2–11/13 (skip 10/30)
	   12–1:30 PM 7045 – US Immigration Policy Albro 10/19–11/23	 12–1:30 PM 4072 – Intelligence and Democracy Seckinger 10/20–12/1 (skip 11/3)	  12–1:30 PM 5084 – Reading War and Peace: Part 2 Pfordresher 9/30–10/28	   12–1:30 PM 5089 – Poetry of Seamus Heaney Griffin 10/1–10/22	 12–1:30 PM 1065 – Never Too Old to Play Some More Pilloff 10/9–11/13
		 12–1:30 PM 5085 – Revolutionary Writers and Their Rhetoric Sullivan 10/27–12/1 (skip 11/3)	 12–1:30 PM 6026 – Healthy Skepticism in a Data-driven World Stutts 10/7–11/4 (skip 10/21)	   12–1:30 PM 4075 – Gerrymandering French 10/15–11/12	 12–1:30 PM 2029 – Food and Health Terzian 10/23–11/20
				 12–1:30 PM 6027 – Exploring the Solar System Summers 10/15–12/3 (skip 11/5, 11/26)	
AFTERNOON	 2–3:30 PM 1066 – Best of Hitchcock Sherwin 9/28–10/26 (skip 10/12)	 2–3:30 PM 6046 – Chemistry Matters! Savkar 10/6–10/27	 2–3:30 PM 3105 – Civil War in Arlington Vaselopoulos 10/7–11/4	   2–3:30 PM 4073 – Asia-US Relations: Critical Issues Sutter 10/8–10/29	  2–3:30 PM 3108 – Foodways: Food in History Patterson 10/30–12/11 (skip 11/27)
	 2–3:30 PM 4076 – Issues in National Security Siegrist 10/26–12/7	 2–3:30 PM 5088 – Shakespeare's Comedies Collins 10/20–11/17 (skip 11/3)	   2–3:30 PM 7046 – Population Trends Multiple 10/7–10/28	 1:30–3:00 PM 6048 – Autumn History and Nature Ambles Multiple 10/22–11/19	
		 2–3:30 PM 3103 – History of Military Aviation Norton 11/10–12/1	  2–3:30 PM 1067 – Songwriters Gone Too Soon MacCleave 10/14–11/4		
		   2–3:30 PM 7043 – Genealogy: Brick Walls & Questions DeLauder 11/10–12/1			

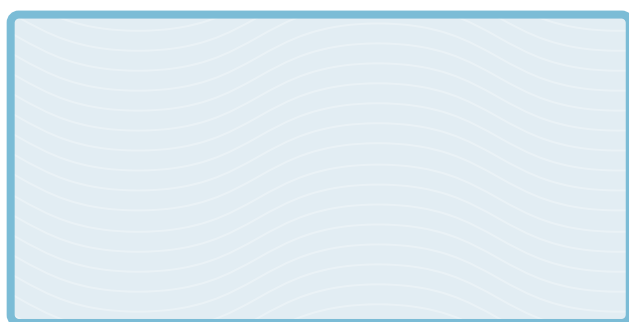


Encore Learning
2110 Washington Blvd., Room 349
Arlington, VA 22204

Registration Begins at 10:00 AM
Tuesday, September 8, 2026



This catalog is printed
on recycled paper.



Encore Learning Fall 2026

Become a Member

Membership in Encore Learning is open to all individuals over 50 years of age, regardless of residence. Membership brings you:

- **Educational Value** — Access to high-quality academic courses at rates far below those charged by most other educational institutions in the Washington, DC area.
- **New Friends** — Opportunities to socialize with other members through our specialty clubs, special events, and while taking courses.
- **Insight** — Participation in Encore Learning special events offered throughout the year, including lectures and tours.

Members may register for courses, join our clubs, and reserve space in members-only Special Events.

Annual membership dues are \$65 per person. Members may register for as many courses as desired at \$55 per course.

About Encore Learning

Encore Learning was founded in 2002 as Arlington Learning in Retirement Institute and thrives today with over 1200 members and offering more than 80 courses and 50 events each year for those over 50. More than 150 volunteers plan and teach courses; procure outstanding speakers and tours; and lead our dynamic clubs. Join us to get involved. You will make new friends, gain new insights, explore local treasures, and expand your world.

Contact Information

www.encorelearning.net
info@encorelearning.net
(703) 228-2144

SCAN
QR Code
TO LEARN
ABOUT
Encore Learning

